

OCTOBER 1903

THE RED BOOK



A SHORT STORY MAGAZINE

THE RED BOOK

EDITED BY TRUMBULL WHITE

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COVER DESIGNED BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

PHOTOGRAPHIC ART STUDIES BY MORRISON

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CHARLES M. RICHTER, Business Manager.

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The Red Book Wins Readers

MRS. CLARENCE MACKAY encloses
#1. for ten copies of the June
number of the Red Book to be
sent to her by return mail.
Harbor Hill
Brooklyn, Long Island

Red Book Readers—Red Book Friends

June 2, 1903

No. 395

The Western News Company CHICAGO

WEEKLY BULLETIN

PERIODICAL DEPARTMENT

Dealers should file these bulletins for future reference.

The Red Book. The June issue, which is the second number published of this new magazine, we are temporarily out of. We are booking all orders and will fill them as soon as a new supply is received. If you have on hand more copies of this issue than you feel sure of selling, kindly include same with your next returns.

Red Book Sales Phenomenal

No. 404

August 4, 1903

The Western News Company CHICAGO

WEEKLY BULLETIN

PERIODICAL DEPARTMENT

Dealers should file these bulletins for future reference.

The Red Book. We are temporarily out of the August issue. All orders received we will book and fill as soon as we can secure a new supply. If you have more copies on hand than you feel sure of selling, kindly include them with your next returns.

Keep Your Eye on The Red Book

Red Book Breaks all Records

Ask Your Neighbor, Ask Your Newsdealer, Ask Yourself

DID YOU EVER BEFORE HEAR OF A MAGAZINE THAT REACHED THE 100,000 mark in circulation when only six months old?

DID YOU EVER SEE A NEW MAGAZINE, AS GENERALLY CIRCULATED, AS widely read, as highly praised? Did you ever see a magazine more attractive, spirited and up-to-date in its covers, its stories and its illustrations?

DID YOU EVER BEFORE HEAR OF A MAGAZINE THAT BEGAN UNHERALDED, depended on its merit rather than on any ingenious "scheme" for pushing sales, and was compelled to increase its editions each month, 10,000 and even 20,000, above the preceding month's output?

DID YOU EVER BEFORE HEAR OF A MAGAZINE, YOUNG OR OLD, WHOSE editions were exhausted within two weeks from the day of publication; thus forcing the branches of the American News Company—there are thirty-seven of them—to issue bulletins to local newsdealers calling for such copies as they might be able to spare, to fill re-order from stands sold out? (See fac simile bulletins on preceding page. Confidentially, we may say that these bulletins brought little result, because there were no surplus copies anywhere.)

Stories in the November Red Book

THE NOVEMBER RED BOOK will be full of clever fiction by the best writers. Among the stories ready to announce are the following:

"THE BENEVOLENCE OF DOUGLAS," by Henry C. Rowland, a delightful story of a pretty girl and a buried treasure on the Florida coast.

"HONOR OF THIEVES," by Rex E. Beach, a strong tale of south-western border life with a startling denouement.

"MR. DOUBLEWAY'S INCUBATOR," by Hayden Carruth, relating the experience of a city man who seeks country life and chicken-raising as a vocation.

"THE ALL-STAR CAST," by Leigh Gordon Giltner, the story of a young woman who on one occasion, at least, proved herself a great actress.

"THE MAN WHO WAS ONCE A KING," by J. K. Wilson, an amusing tale of a New England skipper and his experience as an African Monarch.

"THROUGH REGGIE'S SPECTACLES," by Grace Kincaid Morey, the tale of a young brother's share in a progressive courtship.

Better Watch The Red Book

THE RED BOOK is a magazine of original short stories, the best stories that can be obtained anywhere, not only from authors of high fame and and recognized ability, but those writers who are just beginning to win their laurels, and whose contributions frequently have a freshness of spirit and virility of style not to be found in some of wider reputation.

THE RED BOOK invites the submission of manuscripts of short stories, and will render prompt and careful editorial judgment as to their availability. Manuscripts must be sent flat or folded—never rolled,—fully prepaid, and accompanied by an addressed and stamped envelope for return. The utmost care will be taken of manuscripts submitted, but the Editor cannot be responsible for loss or damage in the mail or otherwise. Manuscripts should be between 1,000 and 6,000 words in length. Any clean, original story may be available. There is no purpose to limit the field to those of one form, and manuscripts submitted for consideration will be judged upon their merit alone.

Best Fiction by Best Writers

Photographic Art Studies

By Morrison, Chicago

American Types of Beauty





Photograph by Morrison, Chicago



Photograph by Morrison, Chicago



Photograph by Morrison, Chicago



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DRAWN BY J. V. McFALL

"He looked at her with a faint smile."

"The Man Who Saved the President's Life;" see page 520

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THE RED BOOK

Vol. I

October, 1903

No. 6

The Man Who Saved the President's Life

BY E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

It was the second day out, and people were beginning to settle down into their steamer clothes and manners. The girl had already established a little court, as was usual with her wherever she went. The man had not yet appeared.

He came just as the deck-steward appeared with the afternoon tea. He was tall and pale, with dark, deep-set eyes and a sensitive mouth, notwithstanding its straight, firm lines. His features were hard and cleanly cut, his clothes hung loosely about him, as if his gauntness were merely the temporary result of some recent illness. He stepped from the gangway out on to the deck with some hesitation; but once there, he swept the deck with a keen, masterful glance. A lurch of the steamer threw him against the side of a chair. He calmly seated himself in it and commenced to look bored.

The chair was next to the girl's, but he did not appear to notice the fact. Several of the young men who were in attendance upon her had coveted that chair, but in vain. The girl, however, made no remark at this act of calm appropriation. It was left for his servant, who appeared a few minutes later with rugs and a small library of books, to point out to him that he was a trespasser.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said,

"but I don't think that this is your chair."

The man looked annoyed.

"It will do," he said shortly, "unless," he added, turning to the girl, "it belongs to one of your friends."

The girl smiled upon him pleasantly.

"It is my aunt's chair," she said; "but I think that you may safely occupy it for the present, at any rate. She will not be on deck this afternoon."

The young man raised his cap, but he seemed curiously bereft of words. His thanks were barely articulate, and if it were possible for him to have become paler, he certainly did so. His long, white hands clutched nervously at the rug which covered his knees. Every now and then he cautiously studied the girl's profile. Under his breath he groaned to himself.

"This is the beginning! What a fool I am! What a fool I have been!"

There was a change also in the girl. Her high spirits seemed to have deserted her. Her laughter was forced, the sallies of her cavaliers failed to amuse her. She, too, was apparently conscious of the sudden approach of tragedy. One by one her attendants deserted her. Soon she was alone with the man.

They did not begin to talk at once.

They both seemed interested in the tumbled gray waste of waters through which the steamer was ploughing her way. But presently her rug slipped, and she felt it replaced with firm, skilful fingers. She thanked him—almost shyly for her—and they began to talk.

Their conversation took its tedious but necessary course through the desert of the commonplace, but long before the dinner-bell rang the probationary period was past. He had learned that she was the Miss Ursula Bateman to whom New York society papers loved to allude as the prototype of the modern American young woman of fashion. She was tired of Newport and Lenox, and, although she did not tell him so, she was tired also of being ceaselessly importuned to marry one or another of a goodly number of eager young men. She was an orphan and her own mistress. In a moment of inspiration she had planned this flight, a Continental tour amongst the unvisited places of Europe, with an elderly aunt of purely negative tendencies. She was very enthusiastic over her escape.

"You can't imagine how it feels," she told him, as they leaned over the rail together to watch a shoal of porpoises, "to be really free from it all for a month or two, at any rate. We're too much in earnest over our pleasure. We make a business of it, as we do of everything else."

He looked at her with a faint smile.

"I'm glad to see," he said gravely, "that you have emerged from the holocaust without any inefaceable signs of the struggle."

She laughed good-humoredly.

"Oh! I know what you're thinking," she exclaimed; "but it isn't in the face alone one carries the marks of deterioration."

"I suppose not," he answered thoughtfully. "Yet the face is a wonderful index."

She turned and surveyed him coolly.

"You would trust your own impressions of a face, then? It would be sufficient for you?"

"I think so," he answered. "Corroborative evidence would, of course, be reassuring."

"But suppose the evidences—all appearances were against your impressions, which should you rely upon?" she persisted.

"I dare say I should find it hard to make up my mind," he admitted.

She nodded and brushed back the hair from her forehead.

"That is exactly how I feel," she said, turning and walking back to her chair.

At dinner-time she was in unusual spirits. She increased at every moment the circle of her admirers. She sat at the captain's table, and everyone seemed to catch a little of the reflected glory of her bright sayings and infectious laughter. But someone asked her a question, about half way through the meal, which for a moment checked her flow of spirits.

"Who was the man who turned us all out this afternoon, Miss Bateman? We can't put up with that sort of thing all the way over, you know. No one man has a right to two whole uninterrupted hours alone with you, not even the President of the United States!"

"His name is Geoffrey Paish," she answered. "I really don't know much more about him than that."

The name awakened plenty of interest.

"Why, he's the fellow," someone eagerly exclaimed, "who's come in for the whole of the Paish estate. The old man was a banker in New

York, you know—his uncle, I think it was. Mighty queer family, too."

"The old man died worth seven millions," the boy who sat on her left hand remarked enviously. "Nice little pile for him to step into."

"Did anyone ever hear of this Goeffrey Paish at college or anywhere?" asked Andrew Bliss, the man who sat opposite to her.

No one had. A man from a little higher up the table leaned forward.

"There were some very queer stories going about New York concerning this young man only last week," he remarked.

The girl caught him up sharply.

"There are queer stories about everyone," she said, "if people care to listen to them. Let us talk about something else."

She was a little later than customary when she came up on deck after dinner. As usual, she wore no hat or wrap of any sort. The wind blew her fair hair about her face, and she was obliged to gather up and hold the skirts of her black dinner-gown. Several young men came hurrying toward her, but she waved them away. She crossed the deck to where the man was sitting. He had just finished a frugal dinner which had been brought out to him by his servant.

"Will you come for a little walk?" she said. "I should like to go out to the bow."

He rose at once and led the way. The journey to the fore-part of the ship was a little devious, and once, after a moment's hesitation, he offered her his hand. She took it frankly, and a sudden rush of color came into his cheeks. The willing touch of her fingers possessed a certain significance for him.

They leaned over the white railings, and the fresh breeze blew strong

and salt in their faces. She stood quite close to him.

"I wanted to come here," she said, "because we are safe against interruption. There is something which I have to say to you."

He moistened his dry lips. His interjection was scarcely audible.

"I was telling you only this afternoon," she said, "how monotonous my life had been. I seem to have been moving along the plane all the time. But once, for a few minutes, things were different. I had what I suppose people would call an adventure. It was while I was staying in Virginia with an aunt—not this one. I do not think that I will tell you the name of the place."

"Don't!" he muttered.

"It was a large, old-fashioned house, very low, and my room was on the first floor, only a few feet from the ground. One night we had a dance there. I fell asleep in my chair afterward, leaving my jewels scattered about the dressing-table. When I woke up, there was a man in the room calmly filling his pockets with them."

"Pardon me," he interrupted, "but I hope you are noticing the phosphorus."

"We will talk about the phosphorus afterward," she continued equably. "I suppose the slight noise I made disturbed him, and he wheeled suddenly round. He was a tall man and he wore a mask."

"A mask! Yes!"

"Which afterward slipped," she continued. "Just at that moment all I could think of was that I was looking into the muzzle of a revolver."

"Of course you were not frightened?" he remarked, with a queer little smile.

"Not in the least," she answered him. "I looked upon the revolver

as a sort of harmless but necessary toy. At that moment I had no fear. But afterward——"

She shivered.

"Let me fetch you a cloak," he begged. "The breeze is too strong here."

"I am not cold," she answered calmly. "It was a memory. But to go on with my story. Naturally I asked the man what he was doing in my room, and as naturally he pointed to what were left of my jewels. For a burglar he was a terrible bungler. The hand which held his revolver shook so that I could have knocked it out of his hand."

"Look here," he said, "I've got to have some of these. It's life or death to me. I'm very sorry."

"I told him that he was welcome to all of them, that I was quite tired of them, and dying to get some new ones. I warned him of the bloodhounds, and told him of the nearest way on to the State Road. And all the time he stood looking at me in a queer sort of way. I was absolutely certain that the man would never harm me. Perhaps I took advantage of my conviction. I began to laugh at him for his clumsiness. The man got angry. The first part of the whole thing ended very much as I had imagined it would. He threw down my jewels and made for the window. He was clumsy with the fastening, and I got up and helped him. It was then that his mask slipped. It was then, also, for the first time, that the burglar misbehaved himself."

Again that queer little smile. The man looked up from the tumbling mass of cloven waters into the face of his companion.

"What did he do?" he asked.

"I shall not tell you," she answered severely. "Only, I think that I would rather have lost my jewels."

"You are not sure about it?" he demanded eagerly.

"It is not a matter which concerns you, is it?" she asked innocently.

He did not reply, and when she spoke again, her tone was graver.

"The comedy ended there, the tragedy began a few seconds later. The man was met upon the lawn by a confederate. There was a quarrel between them, presumably because the burglar declared that he had no jewels to share. I heard the second man declare that he would give his companion up to the police and earn the reward offered for his apprehension. My burglar only shrugged his shoulders. I shouted to them softly to go away. They did not hear. Then I think that the second man decided to break into my room himself. I am surprised that he did not think of it before. It was absurdly easy. They quarrelled. I could see that the first man was determined to stop him. Then there was the shooting. I saw it all. I could not move. I was terrified to death. They carried the second man into the house. I saw him clutch at the air and fall. It was horrible. The other man——"

"Yes!"

"He escaped. It was wonderful, but he escaped."

The man by her side touched his forehead lightly. There were great drops of moisture there, though the wind was still blowing about them."

"Well!" he said.

"The mask slipped," she murmured. "I have never forgotten his face for a single second."

They stood side by side, and the young men on the promenade deck grumbled. The strains of shuffling feet came to them from the steerage. Then the man began to laugh softly, but very bitterly, as he tore open his coat.

THE MAN WHO SAVED THE PRESIDENT'S LIFE 523

"You think that he did not rob you—at all," he said. "You were wrong! See!"

It was a cracked and bent little ring of very thin gold, holding a single moonstone. He drew it from an inner pocket and held it out to her.

"You took that?" she exclaimed.

He nodded.

"That—and a memory," he said, looking into her face, "were the sole proceeds of my little attempt."

Her cheeks flushed a fiery red.

"How dare you remind me of that!" she exclaimed. "And I have always wanted to tell you—you took me by surprise, or I should have called out. Of course I should have called out."

He bowed.

"Well," he said, "I believe it. I took you by storm. All my life, I think—bah! what folly this is! I am quite ready, Miss Bateman."

"Ready?"

"You will tell the captain, of course. I shall not make any resistance. I always fancied that this would come some day, although I never thought that you would be concerned in it. I shall not deny anything. I had broken out of prison with the man Willard, and I shot him."

"Did you think that I was going to give you up?" she asked, looking at him with wide-open eyes.

"Of course. Why not? It is your duty," he answered.

"My duty?" she repeated.

"Certainly," he answered. "It will be quite simple. I shall deny nothing."

She was silent for a moment, leaning over the rails with her head resting upon her hands.

"Please to go away," she said to him. "I want to be quite alone—to think!"



"She wore no hat or wrap of any sort."

He left her without a word.

"Sure?"

"Dead sure. We've got him, Jake. It's a thousand dollars sure."

The girl turned her head cautiously. She saw the red tips of two cigars. She herself was out of sight behind a ventilator.

"Pity we had to take the trip," the first voice remarked. "We could have nabbed him in New York."

"I guess we're all right, anyway," was the answer. "An ocean trip won't do either of us any harm, and I wasn't taking any risks."

There was a moment's pause. The girl felt herself shaking from head to foot.

"What bothers me is how he has managed to escape detection all this time," one of the men remarked.

"Guess everybody thought he was a pauper," the other answered. "Nobody thought of looking for him amongst the millionaires."

"Sure! Old man Paish left him all his pile. I forgot that."

"Guess he'll try and square this thing. He's been clever enough at keeping out of the way. He won't fancy being dropped on just as he's off."

"Won't do," was the terse answer. "Besides, it wouldn't pay us. This is a big thing!"

The men moved on, the girl lingered there. Her eyes were fixed upon vacancy. This was to be the end of it, then. A prison cell, perhaps worse. A sudden shriek of the foghorn broke in upon her thoughts. They had steamed right into the midst of a dense bank of white sea mist. Under cover of the gray floating shadows she stole away to her state-room and locked the door.

Almost before the decks were dry the next morning she was out, and, curiously enough, she found him the

only other early riser. A fresh, strong wind was blowing salt and vigorous, and the white spray was leaping high into the dazzling sunshine. She held on to the rail, and he came at once to her side.

"You see, I am not yet in irons," he said, with an attempt at gaiety which went ill with his beringed eyes and white cheeks. "What have I to thank for this respite?"

She looked him in the face, and the breath seemed to die away in his body.

"I think," she said quietly, "that you know very well—that—that——"

The wonder of it kept him speechless, motionless. There was something in her face which he had never seen in any other woman's. He felt like a man mocked by a mirage of impossible joys. It was surely a miracle, this. He could not find any words, but for a moment their hands were clasped together.

"I wanted to speak to you," she said hurriedly. "There are one or two things which I must ask you."

"You shall ask me whatever you will, and I will answer you truly," he assured her.

"Are you really Geoffrey Paish?"

"Yes."

"You are very rich, then?"

"Very."

"Why did you break into my room?"

"I had just escaped from prison. I needed money to get away."

"And you were in prison for?"

"For nothing I ever did. Please believe that. It is my only excuse for many things."

"I want to believe it," she answered simply. "I certainly shall, if you tell me so. Tell me what your plans were now?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"My fortune," he said, "was a tardy recompense for the act of in-

justice which sent me to prison. I knew that I risked a great deal in coming forward to claim it, but I had had enough of poverty. I was never known in my younger days by the name of Paish, and I have had a fever lately, which has altered me. I decided to risk it. I thought that if I could once reach Europe safely, I could find a dozen hiding-places."

Her eyes filled with tears.

"I am afraid," she said, "that you will not reach Europe safely."

"You mean that you will give me up?" he asked quietly. "It is your duty."

"You know very well that I shall not," she answered. "But there are others here on board, following you."

She told him of the conversation which she had overheard. He listened intently.

"I know the two men," he remarked. "I have seen them watching me."

"You must try and make terms with them," she suggested eagerly. "That sort of men are to be bribed, are they not?"

"Generally," he answered; "and yet, after all, I am not sure that it is worth while. I shall be hunted from corner to corner of the earth all my life. I shall bring disrepute and scandal upon my friends. Nothing worth having in life will be possible for me. I think that I will not struggle any more against fate."

"You must not talk like that," she answered. "You are a young man, and you should have a long life before you."

He laughed bitterly.

"The life behind has been too long!" he exclaimed.

She dropped her voice.

"For my sake," she whispered.

Again he looked at her in amazement. He was still weak from his fever, for his hands were trembling.

"You cannot mean—that you really care?" he said, in a low tone.

She smiled encouragement upon him. The breakfast-gong had sounded, and they were no longer alone.

"Should I be here if I did not," she whispered.

She played shuffleboard badly that morning, for only a few yards away Geoffrey Paish and two men were sitting together and talking earnestly. Their chairs were pulled almost to the rail; their heads were close together. It was not possible for her to hear a word of their conversation, yet she found her attention continually diverted toward them. At last the two men departed. Geoffrey Paish was left alone. He sat with unseeing eyes fixed upon the skyline. She came softly over to him.

"Well?"

"The men are honest," he answered. "They are not to be bribed. I have offered them half my fortune."

She reeled for a moment and then sat down in one of the empty chairs.

"What are we to do?" she murmured. "Oh, what can we do?"

"For you," he answered, "there is only one thing. You must forget. Our acquaintance must end here. We may renew it perhaps—in the police-court."

She looked at him reproachfully. He was instantly ashamed of himself.

"Forgive me," he whispered; "but indeed I scarcely know what I am saying. Either I am a little mad, or those two men were. They talked like lunatics."

"In what way?" she asked.

He laughed shortly.

"Well, they seemed to think that the notoriety I should gain would be a sort of recompense for any minor inconveniences—such as imprisonment, for instance—which I might

have to undergo. They talked of the whole affair as a capital joke, and they seemed amazed that I should have attempted to have kept my secret at all."

She shuddered a little.

"That is the American of it," she exclaimed bitterly.

He looked cautiously around. Her chair was behind a boat. He took her fingers into his.

"I'm going to adopt your philosophy," he whispered. "Let us make the most of these few days."

Of course, all sorts of stories went around. The one most favored by their fellow-passengers, and which she herself had certainly encouraged, was that they were old friends who had parted years ago under some misunderstanding. No one else ventured to claim even a share of her time. The color came back to his cheeks; his step upon the deck became positively buoyant. No one would have guessed anything of the shadow which lurked behind their apparent gaiety. Now and then they came across the two detectives, whose greeting was always perfectly respectful. He laughed once with a momentary bitterness as he returned their bow.

"What a devil's comedy!" he murmured.

Her fingers touched his, and the bitterness fled away.

"You are a witch," he declared.

At Queenstown she found Hoyle, the senior of the two men, in the saloon writing cablegrams, with a messenger at his side. He half covered them with his hand at her approach.

"You are determined to send those, Mr. Hoyle?" she said.

"I have no alternative, Miss Bateman," he answered.

"I, too, am rich," she said hesitat-

ingly, "and I am engaged to Mr. Paish."

"Delighted to hear it," Hoyle answered heartily. "You mustn't let him get downhearted. Most of the men in the world would enjoy a little affair like this," he tapped the cablegrams. "I guess it won't do him any harm in the long run. You'll excuse me now, Miss Bateman."

He was busy with another cable. She made her way on deck again. Only once during the rest of the way to Liverpool did she address the detective again.

"I want you to tell me," she said, stopping suddenly in front of his chair, "is—will—have you sent word to Liverpool?"

"Well," he answered slowly, "I guess so. I hated to do it, Miss Bateman, with you both so set against it; but there wasn't any use in bottling it up. I shouldn't be surprised if something did happen to Mr. Paish at Liverpool."

"At the docks?" she asked.

"At the docks," he answered.

Early the next morning came their farewell. She drew him behind one of the boats and pressed her lips passionately to his. She dared not trust herself to words. Then he went overboard into the gray mists and was lost to sight in a moment.

Twelve hours later he was shown into a sitting-room at the small private hotel which they had selected as their rendezvous. He was properly dressed, but he had the appearance of a man who had grown suddenly younger. His smile, as she rushed into his arms, was a trifle apologetic.

"You have seen the papers?" she cried.

He nodded.

"I must have been the densest of



"Fancy jumping overboard!"

idiots!" he exclaimed. "I couldn't see what Hoyle was driving at all the time; and I suppose my head was full of the other thing."

"And all the time," she cried, half laughing, half sobbing, "you were a hero, and I didn't know it. You were the man who saved the

President's life at Metrofuzo, and for whose discovery he offered a thousand dollars reward."

"It came my way," he said. "You can imagine that I was a bit reckless just then, and odds didn't scare me much."

She wiped the tears from her eyes.

"You have made yourself the laughing-stock of the country, sir," she declared. "Fancy jumping overboard, even though it was in the river, to escape being lionized and interviewed! Why, it will be worse than ever now, when they do find you out."

He sighed.

"They mustn't find me," he said. "You forget, Ursula, the other affair remains."

She shrugged her shoulders scornfully.

"Pooh!" she exclaimed. "I guess the President will have to settle that for you. It isn't as if the man had died, you know."

He turned toward her suddenly.

"What? Say that again."

His voice sounded strange and harsh. He was suddenly pale again.

"I thought you knew," she murmured. "We took care of the man, and he got well. They took him back to prison."

He sat down heavily.

"And I," he said, "I carried with me all the way to Cuba, all through the fighting, and through many sleepless nights, that dead man's face. Good God! Not dead! I never saw a newspaper. I never doubted that he was dead. Not dead!"

He was trembling. She came and sank down by his side.

"If you hadn't met me," she murmured, "you wouldn't have known."

He took her into his arms.

"Ursula," he said, "I am a free man. I can prove myself innocent of the thing they sent me to prison for. It was Paish's son who stole the bonds. He found it out, and that is why he left me his money. His son died in Cuba. I have his confession."

She laughed softly.

"Aren't you glad," she murmured, "that the mask slipped?"

He slipped a battered little ring on to her finger.

"After all," he remarked, "I wasn't such a clumsy burglar."



The Deliverance Of Pima Jim

By Arthur Stringer



One of the horses neighed shrilly, and Pima Jim moved in his sleep. Then the high-noted whinny was repeated, and answered by a mare in the second team.

At that Pima Jim woke with a start, and sat up in the clear-cut, black shadow of his wagon-box. He rubbed his eyes and looked dazedly out into the white distance. The heat was terrific. A midday sun blazed flat and unbroken on the parched prairie-grass. Even Bull Creek trail lay a shimmering line of dust-wallows, and sixteen ragged holes in the prairie-sod, where the wagon-teams had slipped bridles to snatch at a noonday feed of oats, told only too plainly how the horses had fought the flies for one hot hour.

Pima Jim yawned, and rubbed his aching eyes again. And then he remembered! His gaze fell on the huge form of Trappan, stretched out under the second wagon-box. Then his mind flashed back to the long journey out from Red Bend Station, and bit by bit he went over the strange scene of the day before. He had prided himself a little in taking life as it came, in winning or losing like a Mexican. But who would have thought that Trappan, who had sweated and smoked and eaten salt

with him, was to turn out such a traitor, and worse!

Now neither heat nor dust counted much. He had thought that, once north of the Line, a man who had made a mistake could "get decent" again. Yet even while he was lying low and trying to live "white" once more, this shadow of the south-west, in the form of Trappan, had come sneaking up after him—and all for one of life's little mistakes, and a thing done in honest fight, a long year ago.

"How 'd y' ever spot me, anyway, Trappan?" he had asked coolly.

The man of the law had pointed a lean forefinger to the bronzed and wrinkled eye-corners of the other.

"There's on'y one country's bin givin' y' this yere south-west squint, my friend!" Trappan had answered, easily. And he had even allowed that deputy marshals had been shot before, and nothing much had come of it, but with Pima Jim it was to be different.

"It was a uncommon promisin' man y' took off, my friend, an' they want you down there, some bad!"

So Trappan was to take him back, for he had told the man of law that

he would go quietly. There was to be no fuss, of all things, so that little Calgary Nell, the girl who helped "sling grub" in the Irrigation Camp, might never know.

"This yere g'al thinks I'm straight as a Stoney bead-line, Trappan. It may be all-fired weak an' sloppy, not scrappin' it out with y', f'r y' ain't got a shadow o' legal backin' in this yere Territ'ry. But I ain't goin' to disillusionize this little woman—nohow!"

That was the one thing Pima Jim would not and could not stand for. So he had handed over his gun and given his word; and he was to go.

But it was hard, he felt, as he pondered over it in the black shadow of the wagon-box, it was hard to have it sprung on him without warning, to find the law he had eluded sitting on his own wagon-seat, sweating back to camp in the form of a new-found bunkie. Still, he reckoned Trappan had earned his head-money, dogging him in that fashion all the way from sage and grease-wood up to fir and scrub-poplar, smelling him out even to the horse-camp of Tillison's Irrigation Company.

It was Pima Jim himself who had first pointed out to young Tillison, fresh from an eastern engineering school, that he could save a mile and a quarter of fluming by blasting through two hundred feet of limestone. When Tillison had eaten an obdurate way half through his ridge he ran out of dynamite. It was Pima Jim and Trappan that he had sent in to the railway to freight out his second half-ton of blasting cartridges, for it was work the canny Scotch-Canadian teamsters from Ontario fought shy of.

Pima Jim was calmly meditating on the fact that it would in all likelihood be his last earthly job, when

the mare whinnied again, and he looked out at her, solemnly.

"Poor ga'l, I reckon y' do want water uncommon bad!" he said aloud. Then the eyes with the tell-tale south-west squint turned to the heat-soaked sky-line. The horses had suddenly thrown their heads round to the north, and with uplifted ears and distended nostrils stood looking nervously into the shimmering distance.

It was then that Pima Jim's nonchalant, squinting eyes fell on something that arrested his bristled jaw, half-opened in a cavernous yawn. It made him spring to his feet, out between the dusty wheels, with a cry of startled horror, the last trace of heaviness scattered and gone from head and limb alike.

For away to the north he saw a pale, shifting, circling veil of smoke, that hung over the undulating Alberta plains from Cameron's muskeg to the faint, low line of the foothills. Fringing the base of this cloud was a wavering rind of dull red, while here and there what had been a ranchman's hay-stack became, as he looked, a momentary volcano of crimson, capped with yellow, penoning streamers.

A sudden blast of wind carried an intangible pungent odor into Pima Jim's nostrils. Then he understood the whinnying of the horses; in a moment he saw, and knew what it meant. The prairie was on fire!

A wet spring and a long, dry summer had left fourteen, sixteen, and in the lower-lying lands even eighteen inches of sun-cured hay standing on the open range. Water was all but unknown in those southern Alberta sand-dunes, and as he sprang to his horses' heads and jerked the bits up into their jaws, he remembered that the muskeg mud of Baldwin's swamp was two good miles



"He saw a pale, circling, shifting veil of smoke."

away. And there only was any thought of safety.

He looked at Trappan, the one man who stood between him and his life of freedom. Trappan was still sleeping, open-mouthed, and white with dust. Why couldn't he stay sleeping there until the end, or at any rate until it was too late!

Already a mist, first of pale pearl, and then of more somber slate-color, was creeping over the sun. Stamping horses and range cattle began scurrying by. Even the gophers had disappeared. The sultry, stifling heaviness was followed by a gust of wind and the first trailing billows of gray smoke.

It was too late to attempt back-firing; and even if he had water, blanket-trailing would be useless. There was no time to fight fire with fire—Pima Jim knew such grass was too heavy to burn off in time. The only refuge lay in that brackish muskeg-mud, a good two miles away. And even there, with that cargo of his, he could not be certain. Pima Jim, too, had no love for racing over a broken trail on an open wagon-box in which ten loose cases of dynamite lay on a flimsy bed of straw, when in each case lay fifty-six pounds of explosive, which only the day before he had described to Trappan as "onreliable 's wimmen folk!"

He looked out at the circle of rushing, on-sweeping fire, and then he looked at the sleeping man again. No; he couldn't leave even a dog to die that way! Not even Trappan.

The other man's hand went to his hip as he felt Pima Jim's boot touch his ribs roughly. He looked up angrily. Then he sniffed at the choking, tell-tale smoke; and once on his feet, he understood. He saw that line of advancing flame, and he saw the waiting team. He lost no

time in deciding on his course of action.

"I reckon I lead this hand!" he cried with an oath, his foot already on the hub of Pima Jim's wagon-wheel.

"No, by God!" cried back the other, hotly. "You take your chance, same's me, with your own team!"

Then he reconsidered, for Trappan's gun was on him; and he felt that it would be just like Trappan, such a trick! He saw it was useless.

"Make it if y' kin, then; damn you! I reckon y're worth more'n me, anyway. But push 'em like hell, due west, over that hogback! Like hell, or ye'll be too late, I tell y'!"

Already the fatal red line was bearing down on them till the roar and hiss and crackle of it smote on their ears. And Pima Jim stood there one minute, bronzed, immovable, grim, and watched his team answer to Trappan's mad lashing.

Then the life-long fighter in him awakened. He hitched at his belt, mechanically, and ran to the heads of the remaining team. He felt that he would rather die in one good, last race with death, than let that red river of destruction creep calmly about him and carry him off. He flung the bridles on the frightened, plunging horses and snapped up the loosened harness. But that lost minute, he knew, was the minute that counted.

As the shaking team swung round, plunging and quivering with their instinctive animal fear, arms of smoke reached out for him, and he saw the red tide of fire bearing in on him. He knew that it was hopeless. But still he pushed on, carefully, most carefully picking his perilous road, holding his breath at every badger-hole, gasping at every



"Trappan and the first wagon, lurching up the divide."

jolt of the huge wagon-box. Through a momentary smoke-rift he caught sight of Trappan and the first wagon, lurching and rocking up the divide. For one moment he saw the fleeing man pouring the leather onto his team. And then it went out. A blow of sound, sudden, stupendous, smote on Pima Jim's ear drums, and struck, like a fist, on his breast-bone. Then a great, greenish-gray mountain of smoke flowered and withered in the heavens. A black, muffling shower of sand fell about his rearing team, and he noticed that he was bleeding at the nose. Then the smoke mountain drifted away, and he beheld a dun-colored pit of bald and ragged desolation, where a minute before he had seen the picture of a man lashing a frightened team up the slope of the divide.

With a hissing, full-arm swing of his quirt he sent his horses plunging fetlock-deep through the loose sand

—sent them shaking and rearing on till they stood even knee-deep in the sand of the pit itself. At his heels a rushing, devouring, angry sea of lurid smoke and fire parted, hesitated, clutched out again greedily for its own, and then went sweeping past him on either hand.

A spark fell on the straw in the bottom of his wagon-box. Like a cat, he leaped on it, and stamped it out with his feet. Then he looked down at a bent and twisted wagon-axle that lay half buried in the loose sand, and from there gazed out on a world of ashes and ruin and desolation.

Finally, with his flannel shirt-sleeve he wiped the dust and sweat from his forehead and swore; swore solemnly, thankfully.

"Looks uncommon like hell let loose!" he said, as he fanned his moist face with his hat, and once more looked dazedly about him.



To that part of the island public which was forced to travel about the archipelago, she was known as the "Old Mactan." In the advertisements and schedules of the *Compania Co-operativa* she figured as a "fine, commodious passenger steamer." Capitan Don Miguel Alvarado had his own opinion about her, but he kept it carefully ambushed behind his huge black whiskers. With Macfie and Allerston she was "just a pack o' rotten plates puttied up with tar." Old man Airnstraw, the surveyor, had long since grown tired of turning in reports condemning her as unsafe and unseaworthy. There was something in the atmosphere of the Captain of the Port that discouraged him in the practice. He mentioned it, quite casually, for about the sixtieth or seventieth time, to Allerston, whom he met on the Mole one day, and was called a fool, as usual, for his trouble.

"Don't you know," added the engineer to his calm expression of opinion, "That Don Francisco is the *Compania Co-operativa* as well as the Captain of the Port?"

"You're young, Jamie," answered the old man. "When you've lived as long in Manila as I have, you'll not be saying things about the gov-

ernment, even if you are a British subject."

"I'll go my own way, and I'll say my own say," replied the engineer, "and if I like I'll say it to Don Francisco himself."

"You'll be better coming out of the Mactan now," said Airnstraw, "than goin' down in her some day ye're not thinkin' about it."

Allerston laughed. "Airnstraw, air ye gone clean daft?" he asked. "The pay's the best in the service." He started down the stone steps to his boat, but turned at the float to call back to his friend, "And ye know we live on deck."

The old man stood on the Mole watching them as the boat swung into the river, the excited native coxswain shouting his jumble of commands to the sleepy, careless oarsmen. "There's the making of a good man in that boy," he said to himself, "but it'll come to a fine smash like as not some day, if he sticks to that hooker."

The Mactan was specially distinguished in having two European engineers. It was a tribute to the old glory which had originated her description in the prospectus of the company. Only two other ships of the line were so honored, and in neither of them were both engineers



“Mind the fiddle, Jamie. Ye’re a rare player.”

Scotch. The river-front gossip said, it is true, that that was because Macfie would neither take another ship, nor let the company take Allerston from him. They used to say along the Mole that not even Macfie himself could remember when he came to the Philippines, it was so long ago. But it was written down in the books somewhere, for he had brought the Mactan out from England in the distant past when she was new. The day Allerston landed in Manila Macfie took him in tow, and they had been together in the Mactan ever since. Nobody knew their packet better than they, not even Capitan Miguel. Allerston had made a close survey of his ship on joining her. When he mentioned to his chief some of the things he had noted, Macfie grinned and remarked sententiously that it was seldom wise to tell all one knew.

They were pounding through the Samar-Leyte strait one afternoon, when Allerston came on deck for a breath of air. Macfie was sitting in the big chair by the main hatch. Just ahead of the hatch stood the two huge boxes where the cook kept the wood for the galley fires. There, too, the chicken coops were set. From the freight boom hung the bunches of bananas that always formed a considerable part of the provisions of a voyage, within easy reach, so that whoever was hungry might help himself. Farther ahead was the forward deck house, where Alvarado's cabin was connected with the chart house.

"Mac," said Allerston, "I'm thinking the spare cabin in the after deck house would be better than where we are."

"Then when you've nothing better to be doing, you might be moving," said the old man.

Allerston grinned and went below

again. For three or four days neither of them mentioned his suggestion. Then one day as they were changing watches, Macfie remarked casually:

"I was thinking you would be shifting quarters."

"Well, then, I will," replied Allerston. He called two of the cabin boys and began to move. When Macfie came up an hour or so later, Allerston said: "We're not so cramped as below, and I've a better swing for my fiddle."

"Mind the fiddle, Jamie," answered Macfie. "Ye're a rare player at it."

The better chance that the topside quarters gave them both for something more important than Allerston's fiddle, neither of them ever mentioned. But from time to time it became more evident that the younger man was ill-pleased with the situation below. Macfie found him at work on a set of plans one day, and demanded to know what it was all about. Allerston showed him not long afterward, by rigging a lever to operate the starting gear. The long arm led up the engine-room companionway, and when Allerston sat on deck it was within easy reach of his chair. Then he worked an arm on the lever so that he could control the lever by his foot, and, book in hand, sat out his watch comfortably on deck, within reach of a life raft or wood box if anything happened.

Allerston was coming up the steps of the landing on the Mole in front of the custom house one afternoon when he met Airnstraw. The Mactan was just in from Surigao with a cargo of hemp, and was anchored outside waiting for her berth in the river.

"Well, Jamie," said the old sur-



“Ready to shove over when Jamie came with the girl.”

vveyor, "when'll ye be comin' out o' that old packet?"

Allerston grinned. "Still harpin' on that, Airstraw?" he asked.

The old man shook his head. He caught the young engineer by the arm and pulled him away from the throng of men moving up and down the Mole.

"I'm tellin' ye, Jamie," he said, when he was sure no one could overhear, "it's time you and Mac were gettin' out of her while you can. It's clean past a joke, Jamie, an' ye know I'm your friend."

The seriousness of the old surveyor had its effect. Allerston turned sharply on him.

"If it's past a joke, Airstraw," he said, "it's past talking in riddles. Out with it, man. What do ye know?"

Airstraw answered straight to the point. "The new Hong Kong underwriters," he said, "have taken her for eighty thousand dollars, and you know that's no fair risk, least not for you and Mac."

"Eighty thousand!" ejaculated Allerston, with a whistle.

"She's bad enough by herself," Airstraw went on, "without Miguel. He's a bad skipper for that insurance. If he should happen to——"

"Treason! Treason, Airstraw!" said Allerston. "You'll be talking Don Francisco next, and 'when you've lived in Manila as long as I have you'll not be saying things about the government, even if you are a British subject.'"

"Yes, I will be talking Don Francisco," exclaimed Airstraw, with sudden emphasis, "and Don Juan too, for the matter o' that. I'm an old man and I've seen these doings a matter o' years now, and I know Miguel Alvarado. I've small need to be tellin' you so frequent Jamie, that I'm your friend. If ye'll take

a friend's advice you and Mac will be coming out of your old tub now while you can. There's plenty for you both to be doing, and new ships you can have for the asking. Then why wouldn't ye, Jamie, why not?"

"I don't know, Airstraw," replied the younger man, sobered by his friend's earnestness and insistence. "But you know Mac brought her out and has been in her ever since, and I'm doubtful about it. A trip or two more any way, and then maybe——"

He turned up the Mole toward the office of the company and left his old friend still anxious to protest further.

There came a morning not long afterward when the Mactan sailed from Manila with a small cargo and not a passenger. She was bound to the east coast with stores for the miners at Mambulao. Don Francisco's red eye, as the fishermen called the light at the end of the Mole, had hardly ceased to wink, and the sun was just purpling the mist above the hills of Morong, when the gangplank was hauled in and the mooring cables began to clank over the winch. Two or three early passers stopped on the Bridge of Spain to watch the bow swing slowly out into the Pasig. There was hardly a stir yet among the shipping that crowded the river, and only here and there a *banca* was afloat, some enterprising *sacatero* getting his grass to market betimes, or an occasional fisherman going out to his nets and traps.

At last she was clear of the Mole and headed down stream. Stern lines were cast off, and the Mactan moved out with speed accelerated by the swift current of the river. She was abreast of old Fort Santiago, just opposite the *Capitanía del Puerto*,

when a *carromatta* dashed through the Plaza Moraga at top speed and halted on the Mole where she had been moored. A little man, dressed all in white, with a huge pith helmet, jumped out and frantically waved his sun umbrella at the rapidly retreating ship. His shouts producing no response, he drew a small silver whistle and blew a long, imperative call. But the Mactan was headed for the open sea and if anyone aboard heard whistle or shouts he did not care.

The little man watched her pass the buoy that marked the bar at the mouth of the river, and stood looking after her as if by sheer force of will to make her turn and come back. He was the manager of the company, and the ship had no right to go on if he wished her to stop. At last, as if struck by a sudden inspiration, he jumped back into the *carromatta* and hurried off toward the *Capitanía del Puerto* to tell his troubles to Don Francisco.

The Mactan was nearing Corregidor three hours later when the result of Don Juan's call on the Captain of the Port took visible shape on the halcyards at the signal station. Capitan Miguel stared in astonishment as he saw his number made. He almost forgot to have the answering pennant hoisted. But it was nothing to his surprise when he finally read the signal, which told him, in the name of the manager, to stop at Bulan for a passenger to Daet. He had his sailing instructions, all right enough, from the office, and besides, there had been an interview with Don Francisco that was not recorded in the papers. This signalled order did not fit with either written or verbal directions. Capitan Miguel was puzzled. It could not be that Don Juan did not know? Then why risk a passenger

uselessly? Well, there was always something new to be found out.

When Corregidor was out of sight astern, he came down from the bridge to talk the new order over with Macfie. Two stops for one passenger, and Daet such a hard place to get in or come out! It would cost more than a day's time. Some rich man must want to go very badly to pay that much for it.

The harbor of Bulan is just a dent in the coast line, with the open sea in front of it. In smooth weather landing is no trick, in rough weather it is impossible. Fortune favored the Mactan with a clear day, but Capitan Miguel seemed filled with anxiety. Even at the best, he told Macfie, the stop would hold him so long that he would be unable to reach the San Bernardino channel by daylight, and would have to go through the most dangerous part in darkness. Allerston had told his chief Airnstraw's news. Macfie recalled it now at Miguel's complaint.

"The San Bernardino is not so easy at best," he thought. "If this should happen to be the time—but they'll not be trying that with passengers on board."

He and Allerston sat on deck and watched Alvarado go ashore. It was an hour or more before they made out a boat coming toward the ship with a passenger.

"Mac," said Allerston, "it's a woman."

"Ay," answered Macfie. "There's a woman in the boat."

"Mac," said Allerston, "she's not a white woman."

"No," replied Macfie, "she'll be a native."

"There's what I'm not clear about in this," exclaimed the younger man.

"Ye'll be better with not bothering your head about it," said Macfie.

"Things happen in these waters, Jamie, ye've no call to meddle with."

"I'm not keen to meddle," answered Allerston, "but it's fair queer for the Mactan to be stopping half a day at Bulan to pick up a native, and her a woman, with having to put in through that ram's-horn channel at Daet and lose another day to land her again. "If," he added as if by after thought, "we ever get there."

She was a little bit of a thing, so slight that she seemed to Allerston, as he watched her coming up the gangway, no more than a child. She wore a waist of coarse hemp, with huge, stiff kerchief of the same material about her neck and shoulders, and her long, bright skirt was of the cheap cotton stuff the country people use. If she had jewelry it was in hiding, for not a ring or ornament did she show. Her baggage came up rolled in the usual mat, and the engineer almost unconsciously classified her with the steerage passengers who ordinarily ate, slept and lived under the awning on the main deck forward of the deck house. Later in the afternoon, when a chance errand took him there, he was surprised not to see her.

"Santos," he said to the cabin boy who brought his tea, "where is the passenger?"

"She has the big cabin next to the main saloon," replied the boy.

"Heh?" exclaimed Allerston. "Cabin passenger?" Then he laughed. He had never seen a native woman like that in the cabin except as a servant. Those who paid cabin fare on the Mactan usually showed their ability to do so in the jewelry and finery they wore, and were clad in *piña* and *jusi* instead of hemp and cotton.

Santos grinned at the engineer's surprise. "She was Don Juan's *querida*," he said.

"Oh!" said Allerston, with falling inflection. It was no affair of his. He picked up his book to go on reading, then looked up at the boy again and said:

"Do you know her?"

"My sister is *muchacha* to Don Juan's wife," replied the boy. "Don Juan sent this one to Bulan when he was married six months ago. But she was foolish and tried to make trouble. Now she goes to Daet. She has relatives there. It is much farther from Manila."

"Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle," said Allerston to himself, and turned to his book.

It was the edge of the evening when Capitan Miguel came off to the ship again, and with an angry growl to Macfie about the stupid clerks who had kept him all the afternoon, stamped up on the bridge. The anchor was hove short before he reached the deck, and Allerston was standing by for the bell to go ahead. Half an hour later the lights of Bulan were out of sight.

Philippine sailor folk have no liking for the San Bernardino straits even in the fair sunshine, but now the sky was overcast and the day that had been so clear turned to a night thick and threatening. Capitan Miguel did not leave the bridge.

Allerston stood the midwatch. When Macfie came up at midnight, he took one sniff of the heavy, moist air and shook his head. Three bells found Allerston standing at the starting gear, just looking at it, and doing nothing else. He couldn't have told why to save him. He had been through the straits several times, and he knew from the running the ship had been making that now she must be just about entering the island-beset narrows at the eastern end.

Suddenly there was a shout on

deck that rang to where he stood, and immediately the clang of his bells saying, "Stop! Back! Full speed astern!" all in one strenuous command. Long experience had made obedience to those signals unconscious and automatic. Before the ears had reported to the brain what they had heard, the hands had begun their work, and when the brain had interpreted the clangor of the bells it was finished. But Allerston even then knew it was too late. He was feeling the crazy rocking of the bed plates beneath his feet, that told him what no words were needed to describe.

As the Mactan struck, slid up, on, and over the first rock, and pounded against the second, the engineer stood mechanically at his post. The first shock sent some of his native helpers scrambling for the deck and open air. Above the shouting on deck he heard a dull, booming roar that broke and died away with a hoarse rushing sound, and he knew that the swells that had rolled clear across the Pacific were breaking on a reef somewhere near. Then he felt her rise on a roller, and instinctively grasped a stanchion to support himself when she pounded down as the comber passed. The ship quivered and shrieked and groaned. From somewhere forward came a terrible tearing sound. Some one rushed by him shouting that the whole ocean was coming into the ship, and then he heard Macfie on deck calling to him to come.

He knew it was the end of the Mactan. It was a saying on the Mole at Manila that if she ever hit anything she would go down. He realized that there was urgent need to save himself, but he still stood clinging to the stanchion, fascinated by the tumult going on about him.

"Jamie," shouted Macfie through

the engine hatch, "are ye hurt, man? Come up. Ye can do no good there. There's but one boat."

The call startled him. He jumped up the ladder, ran down the deck to his cabin, picked up his beloved fiddle, and turned toward the boat. Then a thought struck him like a sledge-hammer blow behind the ear.

"The woman!" he shouted. "Mac, have they got her?"

For answer there was a shriek from the saloon, where already the movable furniture was floating about and crashing into the fixtures. Without a word Allerston ran to the companionway and dashed down, still clutching his fiddle. In the instant that he waited, Macfie saw the boat shove off and knew that he, Allerston and the woman were left to go down with the wreck. The glimmering lantern swaying from the main boom showed him a wood crate nearly empty. He threw it down, rolled it to the rail, and heaved it up ready to shove over when Jamie came up with the girl.

So he stood with both hands on the box, and the huge roller that careened the ship half over sent man and crate into the sea together. In an instant he had it half under him as a float, and was howling with all his voice for Jamie. He had been pitched off the lee rail, and would have drifted away, but that he swam with what force he could to keep near the ship. He saw her black hulk growing smaller and smaller as she settled, and then with a great rush that brought him into the swirling vortex she slipped off the rocks and disappeared. For a minute or two the old man clung to his crate in silence, then a thought came to him that perhaps after all Allerston had got clear of the ship before she went down, and he lifted up his voice again.

"Jamie!" he shouted, "Jamie Allerston! Are ye there?"

For what seemed to him a desperate time there was no response, then his eyes, grown used to the darkness and the heaving water, made out an object moving slowly, he thought, toward him. He settled himself into the warm water and swam, pushing the crate, in the direction of what he had seen, still shouting for Jamie. Presently he was close enough to make out Allerston, holding the native woman on a plank, and swimming beside it, pushing both toward him and the crate.

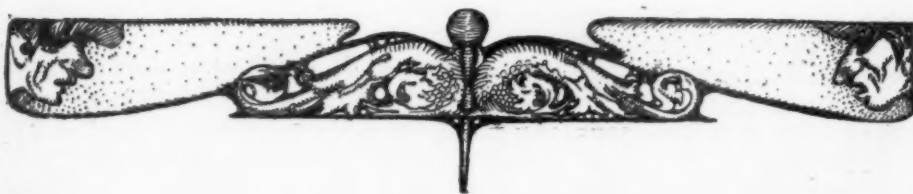
"Are ye safe, Jamie?" he shouted. "Come on man. I've a crate that's 'most as big as a house."

"Mac," said Allerston, as he came up with the woman and the plank, to where they could grasp the crate, "I lost my fiddle!"

"Man!" exclaimed Macfie, "ye were a rare player at it!"

It was a little gunboat coming up from the Samar coast, that sighted them in the misty dawn, so close aboard that she almost ran them down. What had become of Miguel and his boat, she waited not long to see. There was a nasty, lumpy sea on, and she was in a hurry for Manila.

"So the ship's lost, and Miguel with her," said Airstraw when he met the two engineers on the Mole where the gunboat landed them. "An' ye saved the woman, eh, Jamie? Losh! There'll be no more work for you with the Co-operativa. Man, man, what kind of respect for your superiors have ye to be spoilin' a plan like that just because ye disapprove of murder?"





The Princess of Unconventionality

BY WINONA GODFREY

Miss Delmer's course, across the wide veranda and shady walk to the boat-house, was marked by a silence whose suddenness was significant. Conversation had been decidedly animated when her form appeared in the doorway of the hotel, but at her leisurely approach, the buzz stopped and a great many eyes observed her with as many varieties of expression. Most of the women wore a look of shocked curiosity, most of the men smiled, and exerted themselves to speak to her.

Miss Delmer's own face, lovely against the background of a much-befrilled parasol, looked only unconcerned, a trifle scornfully so. However used she might be to the scrutiny of her fellow guests at the Sylvana, she could not help feeling a subtle hostility in their glances now. Last night's escapade was undoubtedly the last straw. Some of the glances sought Dane, too, as he walked at her side, mouth set and head up.

"I do hate to see a man look the

desperate lover in public," said Blair to Johnny Thornton, "and if it isn't downright wicked for a girl to play fast and loose with all the men as she does, I don't want a cent."

"If Miss Delmer would condescend to play with me," drawled Thornton, "I shouldn't cavil at adverbs. Is that what's the matter with you, Dicky?"

"What is the matter with the girl, anyway?" demanded Blair, disregarding the insinuation. "She's the pure stuff really, you know, and—oh well, this sort of thing don't pay."

"Sheer devilry," explained Johnny, languidly. "The devil is in that girl if I ever saw one possessed. But doesn't it strike you that Dane is rather a dangerous plaything?" He treated himself to a cigarette as a reward for this feeble bit of wit.

The fact of the matter was that Miss Delmer's popularity was getting dangerously near notoriety. "My Princess of Unconventionality" had been the artist Travers' toast at the studio ball, and he drank it in

champagne from Miss Delmer's satin slipper. And at the Sylvana she had certainly lived up to the title. When her preoccupied father had put her in Bettie Hamlin's care, about whom he really knew as much as he did of the family life of the king of Siam, he did so with the intimation that Paula was to have a good time, that cash was unlimited, and that she was to be introduced to that vague circle known as the "swell set." Beyond that his solicitude did not go. Mrs. Hamlin looked Paula up and down with a critical gaze, "for points."

"Paula, you are lovely," she drawled, "but you need *go*—don't mind what these old prudes say—that face of yours would win pardon for anything. There is a devil in your eyes; let him loose sometimes." Her tinkling little laugh rang out. And Paula had not minded in the least what several old prudes said.

Still, Bettie was a good soul; her heart was gold if her mind was worldly. She would not have harmed Paula for anything; it was only her point of view which was at fault. And in her defiance of convention, Paula, too, meant no harm. She was reckless, not in the "now come what will" mood of desperation, but from mere thoughtlessness, willful, daring, overflowing with the effervescent spirits of youth and happiness, and not a hand near to draw the rein. It was only a joke for Travers to drink out of her slipper. Everybody laughed and applauded when she rode Dick Lennox's horse up the club-house steps (the gown she wore was a sea-foam thing to dream of), so what was wrong about it? To be sure, Dane, with a very grave face, had come and lifted her down, which was rather presumptuous, as she had met him only an hour or so before.

This afternoon she felt blue, an

unheard-of thing indeed, and entirely unreasonable. What was there in the eyes of these people that she had never noticed before? All because of last night? It had been silly of her. Strolling on the beach with Dalrymple, beneath the full moon of very near midnight, they stopped to admire his new yacht lying at anchor close in shore. The sea was smooth, the night warm, the beach nearly deserted, save for Bettie and Thornton, sauntering too.

"I'll bet the yacht," cried Dalrymple, suddenly, "that I can out-swim you to her shadow and back again, and give you a start, too."

The imp of mischief seized Paula straightway.

"The yacht against what?" she asked, meditatively.

"The yacht against one kiss," said Dal.

"I'll hold the stakes," offered Thornton.

"For Heaven's sake, Paula, don't be a goose," Bettie expostulated.

"I dare you," laughed Dalrymple.

Paula plunged into the water in her crisp white dress, Bettie screamed, Thornton laughed. Dal was so astonished that he forgot to follow for a moment, and then it was too late to overtake her. So Paula won. They went back to the hotel, laughing, breathless, dripping wet. Short as the walk was, Dalrymple had time to become serious, with the result that he went back to town on the morning train, looking rather pale. It had not taken long for this escapade to get abroad, hence the looks and remarks which greeted Miss Delmer's first appearance thereafter. The eyes of the interested watched the two embark in Dane's launch, and presently round the point on the way to Opal Island.

The launch rushed noisily through the water, but its passengers were

silent. When they passed Dalrymple's yacht, Paula did not so much as glance in that direction. She was used to being stared at. Why had she suddenly become so conscious? For perhaps the first time in her life, Miss Delmer felt herself to be not quite mistress of the situation. So the conversation was limited to remarks upon the beauty of the sea and sky, state of the weather and tide, and all those things of which people talk when they are trying not to talk of something else. The island reached, they sought a shady place on the beach and sat down. Miss Delmer poked little holes in the sand with her parasol, and then looked at her companion from under drooping lids.

"I must say you are jolly," she observed. "You haven't said six words in an hour."

"What would you have me say, Paula?" asked Dane, with a deliberately dwelling tenderness on the name.

This was a new mood for Dane.



"Laughing, breathless, dripping wet."

Paula lifted her eyebrows.

"Since when, pray, have I been 'Paula' to you, Mr. Dane?"

"Since when have you become so conventional as to demand 'Miss'?" he retorted.

It had been Paula's idea that Dane was not fond of this game, but if he wished to play it—— Her mouth curved, the little devil in her brown eyes lost his languor.

"Then I suppose I am equally privileged—Rupert?" The name came with a sigh. The red showed in Dane's tanned cheek.

"If I loved you less," he said, slowly, "I would not resist the temptation. You do these things deliberately, and then call men fools and brutes because sometimes they lose their heads."

"You flatter me," murmured

Paula. "How do you know they lose their heads? And I never call men fools and brutes, oh no."

Dane threw a stone at a gull with unnecessary force.

"Did it never strike you that

hearts are delicate playthings? But no other toy is so amusing, I suppose."

"How original you are," said Miss Delmer, looking out to sea.

"Do you remember the night we met? You had been told that I never cared much for women, so you looked at me as you did just now; we waltzed together, you gave me a rose, saw me tremble at your touch; and all this merely to prove that your power had not been overrated."

"Judging from the tenor of your present remarks, it seems that it has been considerably overrated."

Dane went on with some bitterness. "Did you hear Mrs. Leroy remark, sotto voce, in the boat-house, 'another conquest'?"

"You seem to find the insinuation particularly galling," observed Miss Delmer, languidly.

"You know I love you," he returned, quietly. "It is not so much the chain itself which galls me, as that you forged it maliciously, and I submitted. And then it is not so humiliating to be a solitary slave as to belong to the chain-gang."

Miss Delmer's temper was inclined to brevity, but she controlled it. "I hardly know whether to be flattered or insulted," she said, easily.

"That, of course, depends upon one's point of view. From Mrs. Hamlin's, for instance, I presume it is highly flattering."

"And you infer that from yours it is equally insulting."

He was silent.

"I might add," Paula was white with rage now, "that you are exceedingly, not to say insolently, frank."

"I am only defending myself. You would humble me, drag my pride in the dust to gratify your vanity. I have told you that I love you, but I have not begged you to

be mine, nor implored love for love, merely to complete your triumph. You have played with me to your heart's content; at least, I can save myself from the final humiliation."

"I presume that is a delicate way of saying that you won't give me the pleasure of refusing you. You put yourself to great pains to make me understand it perfectly. It would be rather premature of me to accept you before I'm asked, wouldn't it?"

"Paula——"

Miss Delmer laughed and retreated.

"Are you quite devoid of feeling?" he asked. "Why do you do these things?"

"Why do you always want to lecture me?" she retorted.

"Because it hurts me to hear your name spoken so lightly."

Paula clinched her hands, but made no reply. Dane stood looking out to sea a moment, his face gradually setting into the sternness of determination. Turning suddenly, he took a letter from his pocket and held it out to her.

"Read it," he commanded.

"Thank you, I am not interested in your correspondence."

"Nevertheless, read it."

She took it with a shrug, and commenced to read where he indicated.

"And now, my dear boy, forgive me for what I am going to say. I have tried never to meddle in your affairs, and I do not speak in that spirit now, but, my son, your mother is anxious about you. Gossip couples your name with one which is too often on Gossip's lips. I have heard that she is proud to be called the Princess of Unconventionality. I am an old woman, and I have learned that the world's conventions are not to be lightly put aside, however innocently, and a woman's good name should be dearer than her life. Oh, Rupert, give her up. She will break

your heart, as she has already broken your sister's. Edith is no longer engaged to Harold Warren. She was happy in his love until he met Paula Delmer. I do not need to tell the rest; and now it is you. Come home, dear; lay your head in mother's lap as you used to do when you were a little boy, and forget the world that is always cruel——"

Paula crushed the letter in her hand.

"Oh, how dare you, how dare

with the precious heart of man. And you, who can say 'I love you,' and insult me as you have done! 'I love you, but will not ask you to be my wife because it would flatter your vanity too much, and besides the world says you are too unconventional!'"

"Miss Delmer," said Dane. "It was not my intention to insult you, and if I have acted the cad, I can only ask your pardon. I think you misjudge me; at least you have



"Why do you always want to lecture me?"

you!" she cried. "Did you bring me here solely to insult me, or only to show me what a cad you are? Warren, indeed! So I have played siren and enticed him from his allegiance. Is it not quite as likely that it was he who tried to be on with a new love before he was off with the old? If your sister has lost him because of me, she should only thank me for saving her from a love that was not worth having.

"Men think women legitimate prey, but a woman must not play

fallen into one error which I can correct. I love you. Will you honor me by becoming my wife?"

Paula was white.

"I fear I should not be a welcome addition to your home, Mr. Dane. I must decline the honor you offer me."

"If you knew my mother," Dane began, "you would understand——"

"But I fear she would not. My mother died when I was a baby. Perhaps if she had lived, Mr. Dane, I would have been spared this afternoon."

Dane made a gesture of despair.

"I think we would better go back now," said Paula. "The sun is almost down."

They walked along in silence, and both were so occupied with not too pleasant thoughts that they were close to the spot where the launch had been left before they saw that it was no longer there—gone as completely and mysteriously as if it had vanished into thin air. Perhaps Dane had fastened it insecurely. At any rate there was no launch, and the two were stranded as neatly as if they had been marooned on a desert island. They stared at each other in open consternation.

"What on earth shall we do?" exclaimed Dane, helplessly.

"Really, I never saw a place where there seemed less to be done," Paula replied.

"Wait here," said Dane, "and I'll walk around the next point; perhaps I can see something of her."

Paula sat down on a log and waited in the gathering twilight for nearly an hour. A month ago she might have laughed at their awkward plight. Someway, now, she failed to see its amusing side.

At the hotel, the guests were already at dinner, glancing with covert smiles and raised eyebrows at two vacant chairs. Wasn't the divine Princess beginning on a new victim indecently soon after last night's episode? Even easy-going Bettie Hamlin looked out to sea with an air of faint annoyance. Really, Paula was overdoing the thing. In the eyes of the gay widow, that dash of the devil was by no means the least of Paula's charms, but still, one could easily be too naughty. And one would think that Dane would be the last man in the world—but then Dane was terribly infatuated, and Paula's way with a

man was too wonderful to try to reckon with.

As time passed, Paula became more and more impressed with the seriousness of the situation. There was simply no probability of rescue that night, for a reason which came to her with a sharpness that hurt. The continued absence of any other girl at the Sylvana would have argued an accident; with Miss Delmer it meant solely another breach of conventionality. How would her society friends stomach this last freak? What, spend the night on a lonely island with the man the whole world knew to be a lover who had never taken any pains to conceal his devotion? For sweet Gracie Blair, it would have been an embarrassing predicament, fully excused by unavoidable circumstances; she had a whole lifetime of prudence and conventionality to fall back upon; but Paula Delmer, flirt, daredevil—what a wonderful difference there really is 'twixt tweedledum and tweedledee.

At this juncture, Dane returned. He shook his head in reply to her eager question.

"Not a glimpse of anything. I went around the outside point; it was useless to go farther on account of its getting too dark to see. I don't know what else to do. We might light a fire, but it couldn't be seen from the hotel, and any one else would think it a picnic bonfire."

"Then we are doomed to stay here until morning?"

"I suppose so."

There was a little pause, during which Paula took off her hat and swung it gently in her hand. The breeze stirred the curls on her forehead, and the long brown eyes looked at Dane gravely.

"Then, Mr. Dane," she said, in a voice so low and sweet that a fresh



"Paula did not stir, and she did not call after him."

sting was added to its mockery, "I fear very much for your reputation."

"Don't, Paula," he murmured.

"And poor Bettie," she continued, drawing a deep breath. "She was almost angry last night—what will she be to-morrow? And Bettie is rather easy-going, too." She laughed a little. Dane's mouth set in a straight line.

"I will spare Mrs. Hamlin further annoyance," he said, and proceeded to divest himself of coat, collar, shoes, and hat.

"What—are you going to do?" gasped Paula.

"Swim to the point and have them send a boat for you."

"But you can't swim so far. It is three miles and the water is rough."

"Oh, no, it isn't very rough. I

think I can make it all right." He stood up and looked across the water.

"Don't try it," she cried, "you will be drowned." Then in a lower voice, "Don't go—I'm afraid to stay here alone." This from the bold Miss Delmer.

"There is nothing to hurt you," he assured her, "and I think it won't be very long."

He walked down the beach as he spoke. It was so dark now that the mainland seemed only a long black line, and the sea between shimmered and writhed like some disturbed monster. A fearful terror seized the girl as she looked. Suddenly she ran after him.

"Don't go, Rupert," she called hoarsely. "You will be drowned, and I shall never forgive myself.

Oh, don't leave me—because—I love you, I love you."

He took her in his arms almost roughly.

"Do you mean that?" he stammered, trying to look into her eyes. He saw her face dimly in the faint starlight.

"I love you," she said with a sob. There was a long silence, during which they stood motionless. He took her arms gently from around his neck.

"How I adore you," he whispered. "You are cold—here, put my coat on." He wrapped it around her.

"You won't go?" she sighed.

"I adore you," he repeated, pressing her hands passionately. He pushed her gently from him and sprang into the water.

Paula did not stir and she did not call after him. A feeling of impending and inevitable tragedy possessed her. She was to be punished, for what she [did not know, and it did not matter. When she could no longer see the little phosphorescent gleam that for a few moments showed Dane's course, she sank down on the sand in a stupor of misery and loneliness. The night called with many voices; one in the surf dashing on the beach, another in the sighing of the wind; in the murmur of the stunted pines behind her; and the whispers of a thousand spirits of love, regret, and longing, were in her ears. And above it all the kindly cruel words of that letter. Was it true? With a new intuition she suddenly saw herself as she seemed. A vain, capricious, spoiled beauty, a heedless experimenter in emotions. "And now it is you." Yes, now it was Rupert. Would he ever go back to the mother who called him?

What would she say if they ever

met? "This is the woman my boy loved, so you are dear to me"? No, "if it had not been for you, I should still have my son." "She will break your heart—" No, not now, but she had quite broken her own.

Paula sat up. The moon was rising, just a golden gleam beyond the blackness of the sea. She watched it grow, and presently the waves began to dance and glimmer in the mellow glow. The water fascinated her. Was it all over now? Had he struggled on and on, fought every wave, and then grown tired and nothing mattered, and the water caressed his lips where her kiss was—and then—the next tide would cast his body on the beach. She tried not to think, to beat down these maddening fancies. If she could only keep from thinking of his mother. After all, nothing mattered if he were dead. She got up, and took a few stumbling steps toward the sea.

"Oh, Paula, my poor darling," said Bettie's tearful voice. "She's fainted. Johnny, give me your brandy flask. I'm frightened to death. Why, Paula never fainted in her life before."

"It's these gritty ones that go all to pieces sometimes, you know," said Johnny, reassuringly. "But I'd never have thought it of Miss Delmer. Freakiest thing I ever heard of, anyway; now, what did Dane—"

Paula opened her eyes. Her head was in Bettie's lap, Blair and Johnny Thornton leaned over her.

"Hello, Miss Delmer," said the latter, cheerfully. "Feeling better?"

Paula's eyes searched their faces; there was no tragedy in them. She sighed, and sat up.

"How stupid of me," she said. "Don't dare tell me I fainted, Bettie. I think I fell."

"Well, come aboard," said Blair, helping her to rise. "Dane will be having fits if we're not back soon"—Paula leaned heavily against him. "He wanted to come, too, but we said 'no, go get a rub-down, and some dry clothes; we'll find Miss Delmer all right.'" Blair understood.

"Pretty good swim, all right," Johnny commented. "But say, Miss Delmer, Dane didn't know when he was well off, why——"

"Throw me some of those cushions, Thornton, will you?" Blair called out.

Johnny complied, inwardly won-

dering how a few hours on an island could make a girl like Paula Delmer lose her grip in this way. Paula, her senses wrapt in a delicious languor, was rather silent on the way home, but the rest chattered incessantly. When the launch rubbed against the pier, Dane helped out Bettie, who was first. Then came Paula, with tousled hair, and eyes like stars. And she walked straight into his arms, and threw back her perfect head to look at him.

"Well, I thought the Princess was getting conventional when she fainted over there," said Johnny, aside, "but this is right in character."

They say that there is quite a beautiful affection between Mrs. Dane and her only son's wife.



Dan Slocum of the Third

BY GERTRUDE NORTON

It had rained all night and was still raining when Dan Slocum, the member from the third district, got up. He looked at his watch. It was eight o'clock. He had arrived from Washington at midnight, and had not expected to be up so early, but for some cause he could not sleep. When he had made his toilet he descended the stairs and entered the office. The Wilder House was not a first class hotel in the sense that the term would imply in the East, but to the people of Millville, and to the landlord in particular, it was that in every sense of the word. It was certainly all that was claimed for it in the declaration that it was "The best hotel in Millville."

There was no one in the office but a couple of drummers from Kansas City and a fakir who had been selling medicine on the street. Slocum had expected some friends to meet him there, but a glance at the register showed him that they had not yet arrived.

After eating his breakfast he got a copy of the *Morning Eclipse* and went to his room. He lighted a cigar and sat down by the window, his mind ill at ease. Certain urgent communications which had summoned him from Washington and brought him post-haste back to his old home, kept his mind in a state of vague perturbation. The letter from Dick Moore, Chairman of the Congressional Committee, was the one that gave him the most concern. In the letter Moore urged him to come immediately, as there threatened to be a serious break in the ranks of his loyal supporters; and there were many others of similar import.

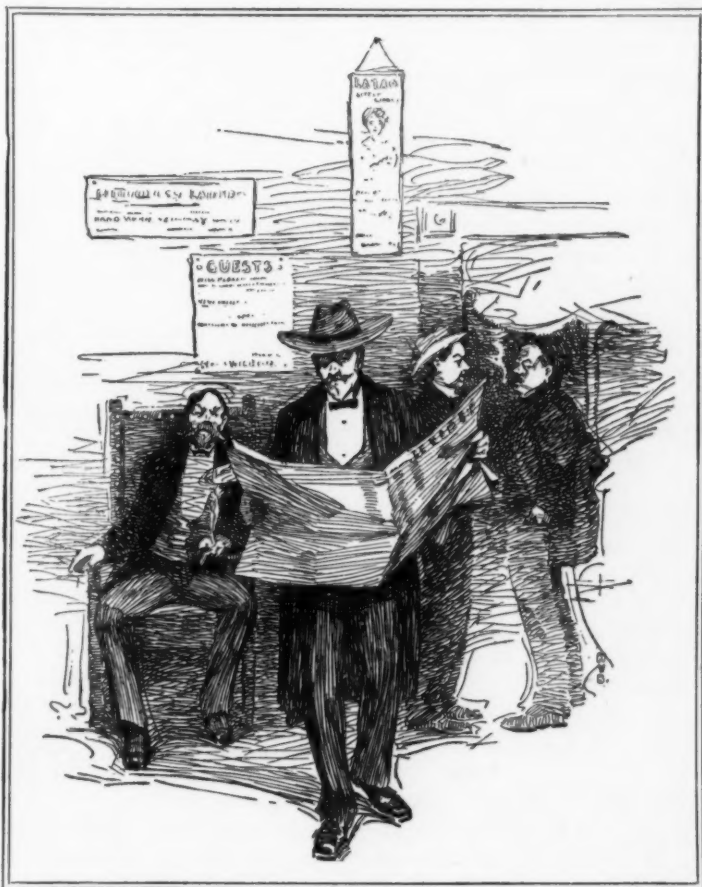
Some one had sent him a clipping

from one of the opposition papers, the *Wedgewood Herald*, which gave him much food for thought. He took it from the envelope and read it again through the cloud of smoke that came from the black cigar between his lips. It ran:

"It requires no power of second sight to foretell an interesting fight in the Republican convention which will meet next month to nominate a candidate for congress. Dan Slocum, it has leaked out, has been summarily summoned home to look after his fences. Two years ago the party was solid for Slocum. To-day it is divided, and if he receives the nomination it will be by the skin of his teeth. For four years, almost, Slocum has been a resident of Washington. The luxuries of life in the national capital have transformed the once genial, 'Honest Dan' into a passive ally of the Money Power. He is no longer of the people or for the people, and is reluctant to forego the luxuries of turtle soup and the choice wines that figure in his daily bill-of-fare long enough to come home once in two years to shake hands with the hard-working men who give him the office and pay the freight. There is no doubt that Dan is wedded to his sumptuous life, but the men who are living on corn bread and sorghum and struggling to pay off the mortgages which the plutocrats hold, are getting tired of the show. Most of the voters who live in the Third District are hard-working farmers or laborers who consider themselves fortunate if they make enough to keep their families from want. Dan Slocum spends \$100 a month for cigars made over in Cuba, and sports a trunk full of hundred dollar suits made from goods imported from Germany, while he spouts about the tariff and the

patronizing of home industries, and votes with Wall Street. It is no wonder that the farmers and laboring men are getting tired of this sort of thing and are looking around for some one to take his place who won't have to be chloroformed to get him back among the people long enough to hand him the office. There is a strong tide setting in against Dan inside the ranks of his

Slocum dropped the slip of paper on the floor and sat looking through the window at the falling rain. Across the square he could see the old weather-beaten courthouse rising against a misty expanse of sky, and about it the maples and acacias. The scene brought many events of the past to his memory. His mind went back to a certain day in July



"The best hotel in Millville."

own party, and there is a voice crying in the wilderness—a voice that is rousing the people from their lethargy, and if the stall-fed congressman should succeed in getting the nomination, he is certain to be defeated at the polls."

some four years before, when he had entered the courthouse as a delegate to the congressional convention. He was a poor, struggling lawyer then, full of day-dreams and lofty aspirations. He came to place Jule

Fishback in nomination, a man who never had the ghost of a chance to win; but Jule was a friend of Dan's, and the speech he made was the greatest effort of his life. There was a deadlock that lasted for many days, and on the 1234th ballot Holt county broke for Slocum, and he was nominated on the next ballot amidst the wildest excitement.

It came like a clap of thunder. It dazed him. When all the house rose and called for him to come forward and make a speech, he walked to the platform like one in a dream. He could never remember what he said. But when he had finished there was moisture on his cheeks and a suffocating pressure of people about him, all trying to grasp his hand. He went home feeling that it was good to live in such a world, and he made a mental vow that the people who had honored him should never have cause to regret what they had done. He would be their servant, and only his duty to God should stand between him and their interest.

It all came back to him now as he sat looking at the old familiar place through the falling rain. Had he kept faith with them? Had he lived up to the ideals that had inspired him when the first flush of joy at his election came over him? He tried to reason with himself that he had. He was satisfied that he had come nearer keeping faith with the people than the majority of those with whom he had come in contact in congress. He realized how ignorant of the world he had been when he left Millville for the national capital. How little he knew of the methods of men with whom he was to measure swords in the life before him. As he journeyed to the capital for the first time his mind was full of glowing pictures of the career he was going to make. He pictured him-

self as a leader of men, one whom the people would revere as they had done the great statesmen who had gone there before him. It was a picture full of warm tints and glowing colors, and he lived in a sort of ecstasy throughout the long journey.

Then came the rude shock that too often comes to dreamers in the hard experiences of practical life. Before the first session was half over, he found that the idols he had worshipped were but clay. The great men whom he had looked on as a superior sort of beings who deserved the homage of the nation were but human, struggling and fighting for prestige and power; and the halls of congress were but a mart where things were bought and sold, and where conscience was something to excite a smile of patronizing pity from those in power.

It was a rude awakening, and the young member felt it keenly. So as time passed he found that the member who tried to live up to high ideals would be only an atom. He grew cynical, and little by little fell into the ways of those who had won their places in the hard school of experience, and in so doing he drifted farther and farther away from the old ideals and the people back in the far West.

When he came home after the close of the first session it seemed to him that Millville had shriveled up into a mere nothing. The streets, with their alkali dust which the wind swept over the weather-beaten buildings, looked narrow and dirty, and the buildings themselves mere hovels. The big courthouse which had once seemed grand and imposing to him, struck him as insignificant and grotesque in its unlovely architecture. Even the people seemed to have changed, and it was hard for

him to pull himself back into the old grooves he had left.

He thought of all these things and wondered what the end would be. What if he should not succeed in going back to congress? For the first time since his first election he was confronted with this problem. At each election he had had a walk-over, and his renomination had been a matter of course. Was it true that his party was turning against him, and that he stood in danger of losing the nomination? While such a condition of affairs might have cost him untold worry at times past, he could not make up his mind now as to whether or not he really cared. But for the triumph of his enemies, he would not have looked on his own defeat as any great calamity. But the matter must be met, and he had come from Washington to meet it. The delegates in two counties had been instructed for him, but in Holt and Green counties the delegates had been left free to act as they pleased, which was not without a peculiar significance. The other three counties were yet to hold their conventions. It was the uncertainty of the issue that had caused him to come home just at that time.

Toward noon the rain ceased and Slocum went over to the courthouse, to pay his respects to his many friends and drop in and have a chat with the different county officials. In the afternoon Dick Moore arrived at the Wilder House and went directly to Slocum's room.

"Well," said Slocum, "tell me about it."

Moore smiled. "I am going to come to the point at once, Dan," he said. "Those fellows in Holt and Green counties are going to do you if something isn't done. That's the plain, unvarnished situation."

"I suppose so," nodded Slo-

cum. "How much do they want?"

"It will take \$1,000 to fix Green county. Bates is the boss down there. He has been training with the Farmers' Alliance in secret, and you know he has a tremendous pull. The fact of the matter is, we have had all we could do to keep him in the party. It won't do to let him go, for he'll pull 500 votes with him. He's an infernal rascal, but we've got to have him."

"Can we depend on him if we buy him?"

"Oh, yes. He's in it for the money. He has a mortgage on his farm for \$800 and he'll be mightily glad to make terms."

"And the other two hundred?"

"That will have to go to Ferguson—not for himself, mind you—but to be used as the occasion may require. Ferguson is for our side first, last and all the time, and there are a few parties down there he can fix with a little of the ready."

"How about Holt?"

"It will take about \$800 to keep her in line. There are Filley and Harlow who hold the county in the hollow of their hands. I know they intend to fight you to a finish if they are not fixed. Harlow has it in for you over the United States marshalship which he wanted, and which went to Dennis. He blames you for throwing it to Dennis. Then Filley is still sore over the postoffice fight at Nelson City, and would be only too glad of a chance to knife you. And the unfortunate part of the matter is, the men you have favored, and to whom we could look for help, have lost prestige and are helpless. Dennis told me this himself. Filley is the most dangerous man we have against us. Aside from the influence he would have with the miners as a member of their union, he holds another card which he is ready to play

at the proper time. That is the Peter Barnes case. He will bring that up again, and it will put the Miners' Union against you to a man."

"I didn't know Filley was such a damned hound," mused Slocum. "But what can he make out of it, do you think?"

"Enough to defeat you in the convention, and if nominated, at the polls. I think he'd do all he could to defeat you in the convention, and in case he lost, would bolt the ticket and pull the whole union over to the Farmer's Alliance. There is no doubt he could do it. All he would have to do would be to bring up the records showing that you defended Peter Barnes who shot one of the strikers while guarding the strip pits for the Belleville Coal Company. You know how a thing like that hurts when in the hands of a demagogue like Filley."

"I know. How much does he want?"

"Five hundred. Harlow can be disposed of for \$300, and that will put Green and Holt counties in line without a doubt."

"That makes \$1,800. How about other points?"

"It will take about \$700 to scatter through the other three counties, say \$2,500 in all. We shall then have a majority of the counties pledged to us, with a chance to draw all the others when they see how the wind is blowing. It is a pretty stiff proposition, but it is the first time we've had to do it to such an extent. With this done your nomination would be assured, and your election as well. It is the only way out."

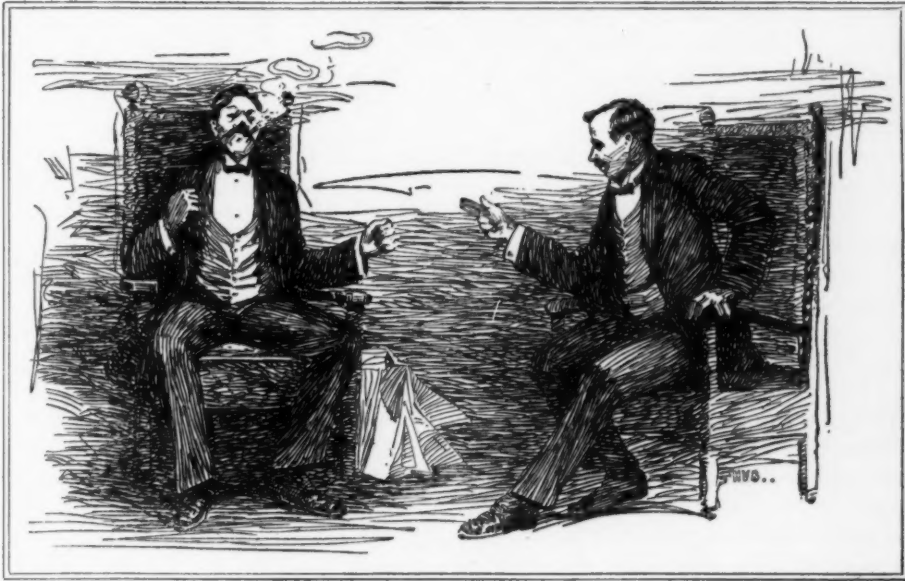
Slocum was silent for some time. Presently he lighted a fresh cigar and seemed to pull himself together. "I have been thinking of another way," he said, reflectively.

Moore looked doubtful. "There may be another way," he remarked, "but if there is, it has failed to strike my optic nerve."

"And still there is another way," went on Slocum. "It is to drop out of the race entirely and let those hounds bark at the moon."

The muscles of the face of Moore twitched nervously. He moved his hand in a deprecating gesture. "Why, man alive, that would be madness!" he said. "It would be taken as a complete back-down on your part, and the opposition would seize on it and use it as a club to defeat the party."

"I am not so sure of that. They wouldn't have much to go on. Then Stockwell, who wants the nomination and will likely get it if I withdraw, would keep down the fight among those who might oppose me if I remained in the race. Besides, I have many reasons for wanting to be out of it. To tell the truth, Dick, I'm sick of the whole miserable business. I have kept silent till now, but this has been in my mind for some time. I have become somewhat reconciled to warring with wolves at the capital, where even the souls of men are bartered for a little brief authority, but when I meet with the same thing at home—among the good, honest, blessed, common people, it makes me sick of the whole business. You know I used to be filled with a great many high ideas of my duty to God and man. I had lofty aspirations and glowing visions of what I should achieve as a servant of the people. God knows I tried to live up to those ideas as hard as any one. But I couldn't do it. It can't be done, Dick—and that is not all; the man who tries to do it will not be even an atom among the men who mould the destinies of the nation. I haven't got down to any



"It is the only way."

of the downright stealing jobs, but I've had to bargain and barter and condone a lot of dirty work for the sake of getting some measures through for the people of my district, and it is wearing on me. I've just had to do it or be branded at home as a stick—a nothing.

"You doubtless remember something of my fight against the cattle syndicate during my first term. There was a crying need that something be done. Millions of acres of the public lands were occupied by the syndicate for grazing purposes. The people wanted the land opened to settlement, but the cattle barons, who maintained a lobby at the capital, quietly bought every one who tried to bring the matter up in congress. It was not only an outrage on the home-seekers of the West for this thing to go on, but it was a clear case of bribery. I was anxious to strike the thing a blow, and armed with an unlimited array of facts, I prepared to expose the whole thing. But I never did. The papers of the

opposition said I had sold out, and it looked like it, but God knows I was as free from it as the poorest home-seeker who died out there on the houseless prairie with the dreams of a home never fulfilled.

"The grazing land was not in my district, but a large portion of it was in Peterson's. When he learned what I intended to do he was very indignant.

" 'You are very foolish to attempt to do anything of the kind,' he said, 'but of course it is only a bluff. What are you driving at? How much do you want?'

"The cold brutality of his insinuation stung me deeply.

" 'Oh, you thought I was only a common robber,' I said. 'But I'm not. I mean to do what I can for those people who want homes, and I want your help.' He shook his head.

" 'You are mad,' he replied. 'You can't do it. Look here, Daniel, this affair belongs in my district. I'm not going to press the point of cour-

tesy due me, as it concerns my district. There are more important points. This matter you want to bring up is already settled. You can't change it if you try. That is not all; if you meddle with it you'll get the whole delegation against you, and they'll kill every bill you bring up. You have some matters nearer home to look after, some special pension bills, the federal building at Creston City which your people are clamoring for, the irrigation bill, and some other measures which you will be expected to look after. Every one of these will be killed deader than hell if you move a finger in this matter you propose. These are the cold facts, Daniel, and that is not the worst. You will lose prestige with the men who run things here; you will not be placed on any committee—not even on that on Ventilation and Acoustics; you will have no influence; you will drop into oblivion, and the people you are foolishly trying to serve will damn you for your inefficiency.

"I thought he was trying to bluff me, but it didn't take me long to find out that he was able to make his words good. Other members of the delegation from my state told me that same thing. I had to take my choice between doing what they dictated, or nothing. That is the situation, and these are some of the things that beset the way of the man who sets himself up to fight the powers at Washington. Now I come home to find a pack of lesser wolves barking at my heels. Is it any wonder that I am tired and want rest?"

"I know it isn't a pleasure excursion," Moore remarked, "but there are worse things in the world, and that is to be defeated by the crowd who are making the trouble. I want you to stay in the race; your friends

want you to stay in, and the people will stay with you if their minds are not poisoned by demagogues—and we can silence them."

"I don't want to desert my friends. I want to do what is best for them and myself. I want to think this matter over, Dick, for it means a whole lot to me. I am going into the country for a week, and I want it all to myself. I want rest and a little diversion from the treadmill."

"It is just as you say. I can hold the matter up for the present, but I want you to stay in the race."

"There is another matter that will enter into the affair," said Slocum, after a reflective pause. "I want to talk this over with another party—you may guess who, when I tell you that I expect to be married shortly."

Moore held out his hand. "I want to congratulate you, old man," he said. "I half expected this. Of course it is Miss Mayfield?"

"Yes. I want to talk the matter over with her. It is not a happy lot to be the wife of a broken-down politician, and I want to save her from such a fate if that is to be my lot. You see, I have learned to look those questions fairly in the face. A fellow can't afford to deceive himself at such a time as this."

Ten miles from Millville the clear waters of Spring Creek flow eastward for a mile, then turn to the south, thence westward, forming what is known as the "Horseshoe Bend." Over the peninsula thus formed, a virgin forest spreads itself. In its solitude are many cool retreats, where one may find seclusion from the outside world and revel in the leafy fastness. In the depths of the stream the black bass sport, undisturbed by the deceptive devices of man. The "Horseshoe Bend" was included in Jerry Patton's farm.

Patton was an uncle of Dan Slocum, and the farm was just such a place as the young member desired for a season of rest.

"I hain't never let the timber be cut," remarked the owner to his nephew as the two sat in the shade of the big elm in the yard, "cause it looked sorter good to leave things the way God made 'em. All this rush an' hurry an' cuttin' an' slashin' an' tearin' down an' buildin' looks as if man was tryin' to grab the whole earth an' leave no place fer God to stand on."

Dan laughed. "I don't know but you are about right, Uncle Jerry," he admitted. "I guess the animal called man has come to think that he is pretty nearly the whole thing. It is fortunate that the Creator of the universe has a title to Paradise that can't be disturbed by any enactment of congress."

"Jes' so," nodded Uncle Jerry. "If he hadn't, the cattle syndicate 'd have it fer grazin' purposes an' the angels'd have to live in a rented flat."

The shady nooks with their scent of flowers, and the spirit of peace and quiet that brooded over the

place, afforded a welcome refuge for the tired congressman. It was pleasant to sit in the shade of the big elm, in his shirt sleeves, with Uncle Jerry, and eat the luscious melons and forget for a time the worries of political strife.

Then Katherine Mayfield lived in the wide gray house just across the

road, and in her presence it was as if a healing spirit had thrown its spell over him. He had known her from her youth, and she had always taken such an interest in his success, and during his two terms in congress he had written to her regularly every week. Her letters, he told her, were always an inspiration to him. And all these years he thought and dreamed of the time when he could have her inspiring presence always. He told himself over and over that he ought to

wait till his position in the world was more firmly established. He had seen so many political wrecks and derelicts—abandoned to the wind and waves of adversity, or submerged by the tide of popular disfavor—that he realized how insecure and unseaworthy his own ship might prove.

More and more he came to under-



"Patton was an uncle of Dan Slocum."

stand how a breath might make or unmake the man who held his place in the world by courtesy of political favor. At any moment those who flocked to his support or fawned at his feet might turn and rend him. If he were to be hurled from his place to which he had climbed, he did not want to see another—one that he loved—fall with him. So the years went by, and now his mind was undergoing a change in regard to the chief aim of life. He felt that now was a good time to break away from the ideas that had impelled him forward in the past years, and this merged into a conviction as he reflected on the aspect of political matters at home. It gave him a feeling of exultation to think of how such a move would thwart the wolves who were barking at his heels. He would re-establish himself in his law office and cease to lave his soul in the caldron of politics.

He talked it over with Katherine, sitting in the cool shadows of the elms, she with hands clasped before her, leaning against the rustic seat, listening, a glowing color on her face.

"It will be so good to be free from the worry of it all and have you with me always," he told her. "I have waited and planned and hoped so long for this time. You know how ambitious I have been, and how I have striven to make a career for myself that you would be proud of, but, Katherine—it is all vanity and vexation of spirit. It is better and sweeter to sit here with you and know you are mine—mine despite any power that could come to separate us—mine by a right against which political hatred and rancor could have no power—than to be one of the greatest statesmen of the nation."

"I am glad enough to be out of

it," he told Moore a few days later. "And I want to tell you, Dick, I feel ten years younger since I got the load off my shoulders. It has rid-den me like the Old Man of the Sea for four years."

A week later, Katherine Mayfield and Dan Slocum were married, and departed at once for Washington. It had been a prolonged session, and Slocum had much to look after before its close.

"I want to do what I can for the people who sent me, while I have the opportunity," he told Katherine. "Going back to the old grind isn't an ideal honeymoon, but the time of a public servant is not his own. It won't be for long, though; and after that all my life will be yours."

"It is so good of you to think of the people," she said, "and I shall not begrudge them what is theirs."

When it became known that Slocum had withdrawn from the race, there was amazement throughout the district. Those who had opposed his renomination and had expected a stubborn fight on their hands, were thunderstruck at the unexpected move. The whole machinery of the district was thrown out of gear, and for once the fixers were at sea. New candidates entered the race and further complicated the situation. New warring factions sprang up, and the leaders became alarmed lest the bitterness of the fight should disrupt the party. They wanted more time in which to get the matter settled, and the meeting of the convention was postponed till the latter part of September.

Meantime Slocum watched and enjoyed the show from a distance, the local papers sent him keeping him posted. They had not criticised him so severely as he had expected.

In fact, many of those who had opposed him while he was a candidate, now praised him, and the *Wedgewood Herald*, which had criticised him unmercifully in the past, printed the following a few days before the convention:

"Since the withdrawal of Slocum, there has developed a gang of wild-eyed office-seekers who never dared show their heads while Dan was in the race, and they are now prepared to make Rome howl when the convention opens. They are as fine a gang as ever broke into a smoke-house or looted a public treasury, and if they don't succeed in wrecking the party, it will be because it is already gone to pieces. With Dan Slocum out of it, the dog is without a head, for in justice to Dan, he is about the only timber they had that they dared bring before the people. And while the show is in progress, Dan is finishing out his career in Washington with considerable luminosity. His wife, who is a lady of culture and refinement, has been taken up and made much of by the

swell set at the national capital. There are many things in her favor. She is beautiful; she has a charming personality and unconventional ways, and a ready wit peculiarly Western. Besides, she has a fortune in her own name, and is the daughter of a man who distinguished himself in the diplomatic service. So taking it all in all, Dan can afford to watch the progress of the show at home with complacent amusement."

Dan Slocum was at luncheon with his wife when a messenger brought a number of telegrams for the congressman. They were from Millville.

"This is the day the convention meets," Dan remarked, "and I suppose we shall learn who my successor is to be."

He opened the first that came to his hand. It was from Dick Moore and ran:

"Convention broke for you on the fifth ballot and you were nominated by acclamation. Great enthusiasm. You will have a walk over. Congratulations. Moore."





The pianist was playing ragtime with much gusto; the stage was set for the first act; the house was crowded; there was money in the box-office; and in the star's dressing-room there was dire distress and consternation. The leading lady had fallen in a faint, and the combined efforts of the soubrette, the comedian, and the stage carpenter had failed to revive her.

"You'd better get a doctor," said the soubrette, at last, looking up from the still face, so pitifully contrasted with its glaring red and white make-up, and the brilliant red gown, with tinselled trimmings.

"Send him, and send him quick," and with a jerk of her curly head, she indicated the stage carpenter.

"Sure. Why didn't I think of that," assented the comedian, as the boy left on a run. The comedian looked troubled, in spite of the humorous lines penciled on his face, the ridiculous color on his cheeks, and his absurd wig and costume.

"I never knew Fan to stay in one of these things so long before, did you?" he asked. The soubrette shook her head. "I'm afraid she's bad this time," she answered.

"Good heavens, Babe, you don't think she's going to die?"

The soubrette studied the still form, and dipped her handkerchief into water to bathe the sick woman's face. The doctor appeared with the leading man, who managed the company. As the door opened, they could hear the pianist drumming

resignedly, "Please go 'way and let me sleep," and bursts of impatient applause from the waiting audience punctuated the music. The doctor placed his hand on the woman's heart and looked at her professionally. "What have you given her?" he said, glancing at a bottle on the trunk beside a make-up box. "Brandy," said the soubrette. "Well, lift her head, and give me a glass of water." The leading man watched critically, and as the woman's eyes opened slowly in response to the strong stimulus of the medicine, he bent over her with a relieved face.

"Will you be able to go on, now, in a few moments," he asked, not unkindly. The doctor had not taken his eyes from his patient, and she turned her face toward him with an unasked question in her dark eyes.

"You must not think of trying to play to-night," he said. "It is quite impossible."

"But the performance," said the leading man. "There's lots of money in the house."

"Damn the money," said the comedian, succinctly.

"Good for you, Jim." The soubrette spoke under her breath, but she tapped the comedian encouragingly upon the shoulder. "Give the mercenary beast another."

She turned to the doctor. "You give your orders, and I'll see that they are carried out."

She smoothed the soft dark hair back from the woman's brow with a

very gentle hand, her face tender. "You're going to be all right, Fan," she said, "only you're to have a good rest. That's what she needs, isn't it, Doc?"

"Exactly," and the doctor smiled. "I am glad she is in such good hands. Give her a rest for a month,

want a scene. I'm not quite a brute, but what about the performance? I can't afford to lose this house. I say, Babe," with a sudden inspiration, "you can play it."

"Go on, you old prune," answered the soubrette, "quit your joshing."

"You've got to do it," said the



" "Quit your joshing," answered the soubrette."

and she will be well, but her playing to-night is absolutely out of the question. Unless," and he drew the leading man to one side and spoke in an undertone, "unless you want her to drop dead during the play."

"No, of course not. I don't

leading man, "your own part isn't much. Nancy can play that. It's the only way. This money to-night means salaries. You won't be so very bad in the part. You know the lines, don't you?"

"Yes, I know the lines," said the

soubrette slowly, "but I've got conscientious scruples against making a full grown fool of myself."

The comedian tapped her on the back. "Salaries," he said with a wry face.

A sudden thought came to the soubrette. "Fan," she said, "have you any money?" The leading woman shook her head wearily, and lifted her eyebrows, as she smiled at the girl.

"Then I'll do it." The soubrette rose quickly. "I don't give a hang for these old sports and their cash," she announced pleasantly, "or for any dough of my own. But you're the only woman I ever knew who was all around decent to me, and if I can get your salary I will. Clear out, boys, while I make up as 'de star of de evening.' See?"

The play went well in spite of everything. The soubrette ran to the dressing-room after each exit, to say a jolly word, or to receive instructions for the next scene.

"Never worked so hard in my life," she said as she rested after the second act. "I always did hate our honorable manager, and the toughest job to-night is to smile into his villainous face and say I love him. I wouldn't do your line of work for a hundred plunks a night. Perhaps though," and her voice softened, "if I could do it like you do, I might feel different. Where are you going for a rest?"

The leading woman lifted her head. She had removed her make-up. Her big dark eyes shone and her face was white. There was a touch of the old fire in her melodious voice. "Where shall I go for rest, Babe? No place until I go to the churchyard. Where could I go? I have no people, no money, no home. I shall go to work to-morrow, and perhaps I can die in another month."

"What's the matter with you?" asked the soubrette in a vaudeville voice that showed no evidence of the feeling behind it. "Never heard you talk like that before. You are young and beautiful and talented. All the critics say you have a 'great future. You're sick, and you make me sick." And the soubrette gulped down a sob.

"Babe, I didn't mean to," said the leading woman, stretching out a delicate hand to the girl. "But I am so tired, and I can't see any rest."

"Third act," announced the call-boy. The soubrette put another dab of red on her face. "Never you mind, Fan," she said significantly as she went out.

This all happened in a western town. It could not have happened elsewhere, or on any other night than the one after pay-day. The third act went with especial vigor, and the enthusiastic audience did not know that it had not received all that was coming to it. When the curtain had rung down at the close of the act, the soubrette slipped around into one of the "tormentors," pulled back the heavy curtain, and stepped out before the audience. She wore the heavy blue silk gown that belonged with the third act. Her sloping shoulders were very white, and her girlish face with the mass of reddish curls, very earnest as she faced the crowd. She had made friends that evening by her beauty and her sincerity, and a burst of applause greeted her appearance. She raised her hand and the house was quiet.

"What's Babe up to now?" said the manager to the comedian.

"Boys," said the soubrette nervously, "the leading lady's awful sick. I'm only the soubrette."

"That's all right, we like you,"

volunteered a voice. There was much laughter and applause. "Sure thing," "Jimmy's all right," and other cries corroborated the opinion of the speaker.

"Then you'll help me, fellows," continued the soubrette. "The lead-

I'm not asking for myself, boys, but for her. She's a mighty white woman. I can't pay you in any way, for I'm strapped, too—but—yes, I'll do it. I'll give a kiss right here on the stage to the chap who will put up the most cash to save her life. She's



"And the bidding went on."

ing lady's got to have a rest. Your doctor down there somewhere says she'll die if she don't, and she hasn't got any money. She'll get her salary to-night, but that's only thirty dollars; and you know yourself that it's a mighty poor time you'd have for a whole month on only thirty.

been awful good to me, boys." The soubrette's voice broke, and her face was flushed, through the paint, for Babe was known in the profession as "a good girl."

Such a clamor as arose in the house. "Send up Jack Henshaw," said some one. The soubrette gave

a startled cry as a strong, handsome young fellow stepped from the house to the stage, but he merely said quietly, "The boys put me here to take charge of the bidding."

"Ten dollars!" from a smooth-faced boy.

"Put him out," yelled the crowd.

"Fifty dollars!" ventured Handsome Dan.

"Seventy-five!" yelled Harrison of the Mascot mine.

"Make it eighty!" called Blondy Dorset.

And the bidding went on. Gradually the men dropped out, for this was a cash deal, but there were dissatisfied murmurs when Handsome Dan said "Five hundred," and there was no response.

The soubrette had watched with interest. When she heard the bids going higher, her heart was glad as she thought of the vacation for the tired woman, but when she looked at Handsome Dan, her face was trou-

bled. He had stepped forward with assurance when Henshaw said, "Wait a minute, Dan, I make it five hundred and fifty."

"What business have you bidding," replied the handsome man.

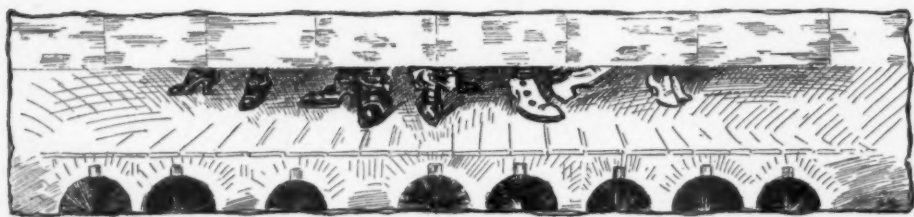
"Never you mind," retorted Jack. "Can you raise me?"

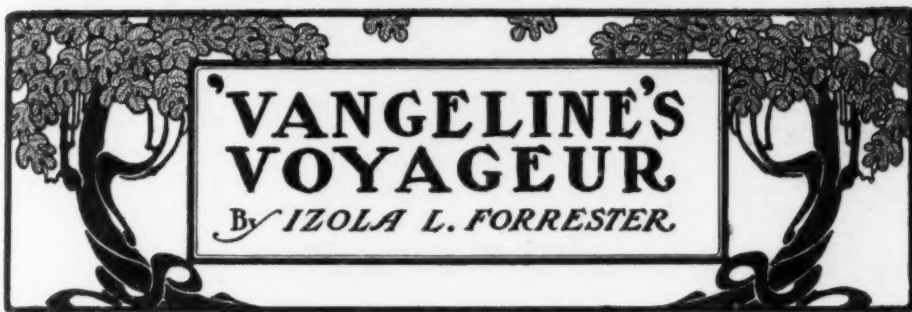
The house was very still as Handsome Dan walked slowly out, and Jack Henshaw stepped to the footlights and handed a roll of bills to the girl.

"Value received five years ago, back in the states," he announced to the crowd, while the soubrette grasped his arm excitedly. "If you've changed your mind in the last few years, Babe," he said slowly, "you can have me. If not, all right."

The crowd was breathless; so was the soubrette.

"Oh, Jack," she cried at last, in desperation, "how can I accept you before all these people?"





'VANGELINE'S VOYAGEUR

By *IZOLA L. FORRESTER*

As you come down the river from Vicksburg to Natchez, you can see them, the trees of 'Vangeline. They are brave, beautiful trees. The oldest rivermen tell how they have outlasted storms and floods for many years, and still are landmarks on a dark night, as the boat swings around the curve at Doucet's Landing.

Sometimes there is a broad bayou here, with only the tops of the trees waving like water-ferns above the river's breast. A week later, and they are still there, dry and free, and the river has slipped back into a new channel.

The water was low when Achille Doucet came up from Baton Rouge, and built his shack in the shadow of the two trees. There was a broad, fine stretch of land from the lapping river to the clay banks, and Achille settled there in content, and told little motherless 'Vangeline it was home.

One morning he wakened, and found his landing high and dry among the reeds and snags, and the river flowing tranquilly half a mile away. From that time he fought with it, and it dallied with him merrily. In flood time it swept up around the trees, and over the land to the clay banks, and Achille would perch on the top of the banks, and watch his little house bob like a leaf on the current, as it sailed out to midstream with the rest of the wreckage. But as

soon as the water had gone, he would go down and build another house, and laugh at the river, for there was still Doucet's Landing, which Louis Philippe said was all fool nonsense.

Louis Philippe was young and strong, and plied his raft all along the shore from Natchez clear up to Point aux Lis. He had been born on the river, and loved it, and respected its whims and caprices, and it was kind to him.

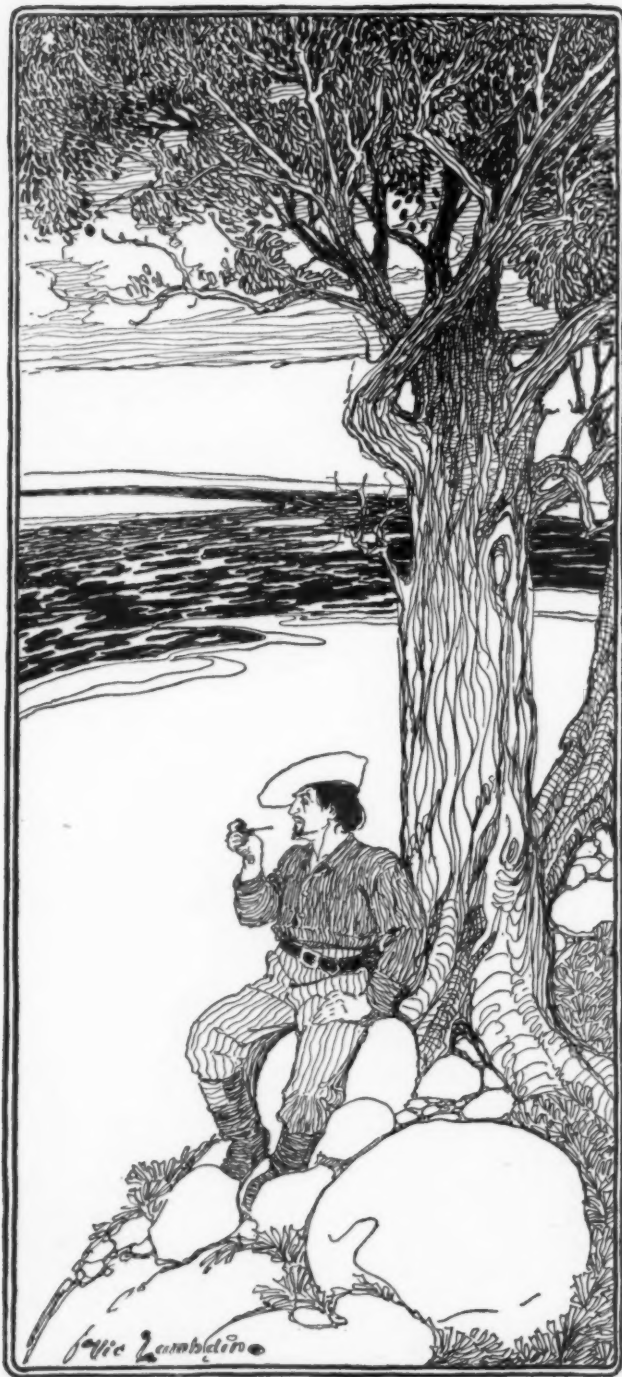
'Vangeline would stand at the landing place at noon, and watch with longing eyes until a raft floated lazily out from beyond the curve, and she could see the tall, slender figure at the pole. He always waved to her, and she would wave back, ever so many times, and glory in his strength and grace, until the far curve of the shore hid him from sight, and old Achille called to her.

In the fall, when the twilight was long, and the mists hung over the river, the raft would come to the landing, and the two would talk low, while the water slipped by with its murmur of sympathy, and the fireflies danced in the thick lush tangle of reeds and water grasses.

"What does the river say?" she would ask, sometimes, as she bent over to catch the soft, faint lapping, and Louis Philippe's arms would close about her, as he told her it said always the same sweet song,

"Je l'aime, je l'aime, je l'aime."

Sometimes, at night, she would



"Achille shrugged his shoulders, defiantly."

hear a sound in the silence of dreams, and lift herself on her elbow to listen to a voice from the river, a clear, boyish voice with the beauty and lilting cadence of Provençal minstrelsy in its tone, as it sang of the love of la belle Marjolaine, for a Breton fisher boy. Dreams were sweeter when the song had died away, and her heart followed the raft down the river.

But Achille called the boy a vagabond voyageur, a bit of driftwood floating from nowhere to nowhere, and 'Vangeline's mother had been a Prudhomme of Baton Rouge. It showed in the poise of 'Vangeline's pretty head, that blood of the Prudhommes, and they said you could find the same small, slim foot and ankle, silken shod instead of bare, in the portrait of a Madame Prudhomme who had reigned in Baton Rouge, when St. Louis was a French trading post up in the wilderness.

So it happened that Doucet's Landing was a place forbidden to Louis Philippe, and only the song at night and

the wave of the hand by day, bore his message of love to the last demoiselle of the Prudhommes. It came in the early fall, the rising of the waters that devastated the whole lower valley of the Mississippi. There had been warnings. Every day it had crept nearer, every day devoured some new strip of land, and still old Doucet shrugged his shoulders, and watched it defiantly, until one night it swept over the landing with a gay shout of triumph and bore down on him. Before they could reach the safety of the clay banks, the dark waters lay between, and the house strained and groaned like a living thing, to break away for its river ride.

At daybreak, when LouisPhilippe came around the curve on his raft, there was nothing left of Doucet's Landing save two treetops and a waste of muddy waters which chewed lazily at the clay banks until bit by bit they gave way. And in the boughs of the



"May I have the pleasure of saving your life?"



"Je t'aime, je t'aime, je t'aime."

treetops were old Achille and 'Vangeline, like doves of the ark, in search of olive branches.

"Bon soir, M'sieur Doucet,"

called Louis Philippe, cheerily. "May I have the pleasure of saving your life?"

"Go to the devil!" returned old Achille, and he took a fresh hold of his tree of refuge.

But Louis Philippe laughed, and the raft came to an anchorage under the second tree, and strong arms lifted 'Vangeline down to safety. It was a very weary, shy-eyed, blushing 'Vangeline, who listened in fear and happiness to the quick, impetuous wooing of her voyageur, and lifted her lips for the kiss of betrothal, under the glare of Achille, treed helplessly not ten yards away.

"Au revoir, papa," called Louis Philippe. "We go to Natchez by the river route to be wed. Voila, I kiss my bride! Again, 'Vangeline, cher papa did not see well."

And the voice of Achille rang out

over the face of the water, as the lips met, in rich and varied language over the fall of the pride of Prudhomme, and fate of the vagabond voyageur.

But Louis Philippe still laughed, and, as the first sunlight flashed up over the clay bank, the raft swung out into the current, headed down stream toward Natchez, and joy.

In the new light, some way, the flood looked vast and terrible, and the small raft a thing mightily to be desired in place of a tree, and Achille lifted up his voice once more in wisdom and peace and

called a blessing on his children if they would but come back.

And you may see the trees yet, "Vangeline's trees," the rivermen call them, and above on the clay bank, there is the red roof of Louis Philippe's castle of love and hope, which he and old Achille built there, safe from the touch of the river's wandering hands, when he brought back his bride from Natchez.



The first time I saw her I kept at a distance and admired her in secret; the second time I secured an introduction and adored her openly; and the third time—well, it was then that Dick Farraday, observing my hopelessly love-lorn condition, uttered a word of warning.

Dick is my self-constituted mentor. His attitude toward me is that of a fussy old hen burdened with the care of one very obstreperous chicken. He offers me advice by the yard, and I listen to it because I can't help myself, but as for following it—well, that is quite another thing.

"They are a nice family and all that, the Burdens," he said, "and Miss Jessie is certainly all that is charming, but she was never intended for you, Howard."

I glared, and he hastened to further explain himself.

"They are health-food cranks, the

Burdens, everyone of them. I know, because"—he heaved a sigh that seemed to have its beginning somewhere in the region of his carefully polished shoes—"because I dined there once."

I laughed at his lugubrious face and clapped him on the back. "Oh," I said airily, "vegetarians, are they? That's all right. I'm fond of vegetables myself. An asparagus paté, now, or a nicely dressed salad isn't half bad."

"'Asparagus paté!'" Dick repeated, with a look of pity for my dense ignorance. "'Asparagus paté,' indeed! They eat asparagus, I believe, when it's boiled in salted water and served without dressing of any kind whatever; but pastry in any form is absolutely tabooed. And as for salads—well, it's all one's life is worth to say 'salad' to old Mr. Burden. My dear boy, they subsist principally on graham wafers, soft-

boiled eggs and boiled water; and they sample all the pre-digested breakfast foods that come out."

I caught at the soft-boiled eggs as does a drowning man at a straw. "There's nothing to be said against soft-boiled eggs," I insisted. "I eat two every morning with my rolls and coffee."

"The Burden eggs," Dick remarked softly, "are boiled for exactly sixty seconds."

I had once, in a period of convalescence, been forced to partake of a raw egg beaten up with a dash of milk. I abandoned my defense of so-called soft-boiled eggs.

Dick's glance rested for a moment upon my somewhat rotund figure, that mutely but none the less eloquently testified to my appreciation of the pleasures of the table.

"For a person of your tastes——" he began severely.

"Oh, hang it," I interrupted impatiently, "what's that got to do with it anyway? I'm not going to interfere with Miss Burden's liking for mush. She can eat health food if she wants to, and I'll stick to meat and potatoes."

"Mr. Burden," said Dick, "is a crank on the subject of one's duty to posterity. He is desirous of perpetuating a race of mush-eating, water-drinking beings, who will eventually replace meat-eating, coffee-drinking mankind."

Whereupon I pondered long and earnestly, and eventually I entered upon a career of systematic deception that I should, but do not, blush to recall.

I began by inviting Mr. Burden to lunch with me.

"Pray do me the favor of ordering whatever you please, Mr. Burden," I said, as I passed him the menu card. "My own diet is of the sim-

plest always, and not such as appeals to the ordinary man. Most people, I find, are strangely disregarding of the laws of health and right living."

Mr. Burden gazed at me benevolently over his spectacles, and I beckoned to the waiter.

"Bring me," I said, "the usual thing. And see to it that my egg is cooked for exactly one minute. The one you served me yesterday seemed a trifle over-done."

The waiter, whose custom it had been to serve me with breaded cutlets, sweetbreads, and similar delicacies, bowed soberly.

"I will see to the egg, sir," he promised.

It would, perhaps, be in order to state here that I had previously instructed him as to what I wished him to do, and that I had also treated him most liberally.

"Now, Mr. Burden," I said guilelessly, "have you decided upon your order?"

That gentleman beamed at me over the menu card. "You are, sir," said he, "a man after my own heart. I cannot do better, I think, than to duplicate your order. Waiter, the same for me."

If the deception I practiced were a sin, surely I more than expiated it when, some ten minutes later, I consumed a practically raw egg and a half dozen tasteless graham wafers, which last I heroically washed down with sips of carefully sterilized hot water.

But my stratagem succeeded beyond my wildest expectations, for Mr. Burden mounted his hobby and rode it with the assured air of one who rides not alone, but with a sympathetic comrade at his side. He talked volubly of things dietetic and hygienic, and finally invited me to accompany him home to dinner.

Needless to say, I accepted with

alacrity. The dinner I well knew would be unspeakably dreadful, but it would be eaten in Jessie's company, and with her bright eyes upon me I felt that I could with a serene countenance partake of any unpalatable mess that might be put before me.

And the dinner was awful; so awful, in fact, that by the time we reached the dessert, which consisted of a certain food that I had been in the habit of alluding to as "baled hay" served with a small portion of slightly sweetened apple-sauce, I had mentally decided that my courtship should be a very brief one.

And brief it was, but on that account none the less ardent. I basked in Jessie's smiles, discovered new and untried health-foods for her father to sample, and took no thought as to what might happen when I should finally find myself married to a girl who frowned upon candy, declined ice cream, and discussed the chemistry of food in an appallingly learned manner.

Our honeymoon we spent at a popular mountain resort, and by a



"New health foods for her father."

I had dinner before going home, but this plan I was reluctantly forced to abandon, because, having dined, I found myself utterly unable to swallow so much as a mouthful of the nauseous stuff that was served at my own dinner table.

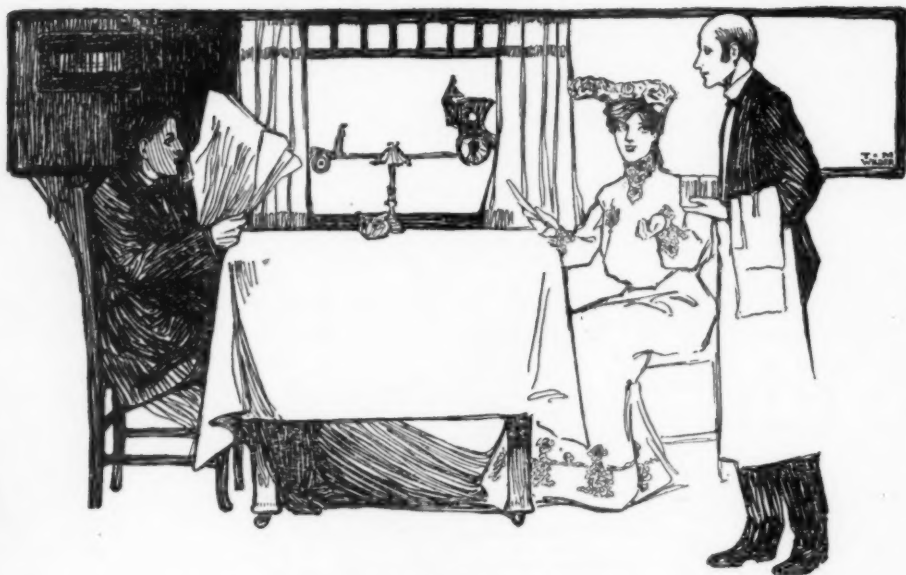
Even when ravenously hungry I ate so little that Jessie more than once complained of my loss of appetite. My spirit was willing, but my flesh very weak; and the more willing the spirit, the weaker, it

liberal use of fees to the waiters, and a brief withdrawal from our apartments at stated intervals, I managed to secure a sufficient quantity of palatable food to sustain life.

But when we returned from our wedding trip, took a flat, and settled down to house-keeping, my troubles began.

Breakfast I could manage. I ate sparingly of the orange juice and health-food that constituted our common morning meal, after which, before going to my office, I visited a nearby restaurant where I devoured beefsteak, eggs, potatoes, hot rolls and coffee. My lunch I took down town.

Once or twice



"I screened myself as best I could behind my paper."

seemed to me, grew the flesh.

My position was the more trying because every evening there rose from the flat below us the most appetizing odors. It was all in vain that I carefully closed our doors and hermetically sealed our windows. The smell of the dinners that were eaten in the flat below permeated our dining-room, and I suffered the tortures of Tantalus.

But I set my teeth and endured with such stoicism as I could command, until the night when the family below us had beefsteak and onions for dinner. I was well-nigh famished, for it was Sunday, and all day long I had been forced to subsist on the most hygienic and unpalatable of health-foods. The spirit was willing, as usual, but the flesh was even weaker than usual; and finally the demands of the latter overcame the resistance of the former.

"Jessie," I said, hating myself for the deception, but feeling that I must either eat or starve, "Jessie, I

am sorry to leave you, but I promised to meet a man at eight. There is a little matter that I must attend to."

Then I seized my hat and fled—to the nearest restaurant.

"Bring me," I ordered hungrily, "beefsteak and onions, a large beefsteak and lots of onions."

Then I picked up a newspaper that lay on the table and waited impatiently for my order to be filled. I had read for, perhaps, five minutes, when a lady came in, and with a pleasant little frou-frou of silken skirts seated herself opposite me. I glanced over the top of my paper and saw—Jessie.

The shock was so great that I very nearly fell off my chair. Had she, by some chance, discovered my defection and followed to upbraid me openly? If so, she had not as yet recognized me. I screened myself as best I could behind my paper, determined, if possible, to eat that beefsteak before disclosing my identity.

And then Jessie spoke—to the waiter.

"Cutlets with mushroom sauce," she said, "and be quick. I am nearly starved."

I lowered my paper. "Jessie," I said, "I'll give you half my beef-steak and onions for one of your cutlets."

"You see," Jessie explained, when we had somewhat appeased our hunger, "poor papa is hopelessly dyspeptic, and he is very sensitive about it. So, because he is such an old dear and we hated to hurt his feelings, we pretended to take up the health-food fad. But the rest of us

always had a second dinner after papa had gone into the library to read his evening paper."

"Jessie," I said reproachfully, "why didn't you tell me that before I had been brought to the very verge of starvation?"

"Well, I like that," Jessie said with a most adorable pout. "Tell you indeed that I ate meat and vegetables, pudding and pie, when I had every reason to believe that if you knew it you wouldn't marry me."

"And so you thought——?"

"That I would rather starve with you than dine at Delmonico's every night with any other man."



The Nerve of Harris

BY HAROLD ACTON VIVIAN

Raymond Harris, actor, turned from Broadway into Forty-sixth street in a moody and despondent frame of mind. He was out of a job, his money was getting low, and prospects were not bright. All the morning had been spent looking for an engagement, but without success. He had had a bite of lunch at the little milk shop just behind the Empire Theater, and he was now returning to his lodgings thoroughly downcast.

Having opened the door with his key he was ascending the stairs when his landlady called to him from below:

"That you, Mr. Harris?"

"Yes, Ma'am," responded Harris.

"Mr. Wallace went out at ten.

Said he wouldn't be back until six. There's a telegram for you under the door."

"A telegram for me?" asked Harris, his heart bounding with hope. "What time did it come?"

"'Long about eleven o'clock, I guess."

The actor went up the remaining stairs two at a time, and hastily opening the door, picked up the yellow envelope. With his hands trembling with expectation, he tore it open and read:

"Harrisburg, Pa.

"Raymond Harris,

"New York City.

"Want you play your old part in 'Cherry Pickers.' Sixty a week.



"Harris read it twice."

You must arrive here seven-thirty to-night, else no use. Catch twelve-ten train. "H. Meyers."

Harris read the missive through twice. Then he swore long and loud.

"Good Lord! Catch train at twelve-ten! It's five minutes to two now. If I haven't got the most infernal luck this season."

Then he began to do some thinking.

"Let's see," he murmured, "Harrisburg is not very far away. Doesn't take half a day to get there. May be a train I can catch yet. Where's that infernal paper? Suppose Wallace has taken it with him." He searched around the room hurriedly. "Ah, here it is. Now, let's see. Where in thunder is the railroad ad? Here we are. Oh! Good! Twenty hour train to Chicago. Goes through Harrisburg. Gets there at seven. Sure thing. What time does it leave though? Two-thirty-five. Good

Lord! I'll have to do some rapid work."

His mind made up, he proceeded to make things hum about the room. A dress suit case was dragged from beneath the bed. Drawers were overturned so that their contents might be got at more readily. Suddenly Harris stopped and dashed out to the stair landing.

"Oh, Mrs. Taylor!" he called at the top of his voice. "Mrs. Taylor!"

"What is it?" came a voice from below.

"Send some one up to Broadway to call me a cab, quick. Tell them to hurry. I've got to catch a train."

Back into the room to finish the packing. A dress suit was thrown hastily into the suit case, regardless of possible creasing. Two hair brushes went between the legs. A make-up box came next, and on top the shirts. He slammed the case shut with a joyful shout and strapped it tight. Down in his pocket he felt for the key, and then a new thought struck him. He had only two dollars.

Harris sat down with a thump.



"What is it?"



"No time to borrow."

No time to borrow money, and no possibility of getting to Harrisburg on two dollars. Here was a pretty mess. There would be the cabman to pay, too. If Wallace were only here. Why on earth didn't Wallace stay in—

He got up suddenly and tore across the room. Wallace had twenty-five dollars in the top drawer. Easiest thing in the world to take the money and leave a note for Wallace explaining. He could get an advance and send the money back the next day. No sooner said than done, and he rammed the roll of bills into his pocket, just as the boy announced that the cab was at the door. It was seven minutes after two. With his suit case banging against the banisters he made off downstairs.

"Two dollars if you get to the foot of Twenty-third street before two-thirty," he shouted to the cabman as he jumped in. The cabman made good time.

Crossing the ferry Harris had time to cool off, and he marched into the depot with a feeling of triumph.

But his troubles were just beginning.

"Give me a ticket to Harrisburg," he said to the agent. "Please hurry. I want to catch the two-thirty-five." It had taken him ten minutes to cross the river.

The agent mumbled something.

"What's that?" queried Harris.

"I say I can't sell you a ticket to Harrisburg on that train. That's the twenty-hour train and we only sell tickets right through to Chicago."

"The devil!" ejaculated Harris.

"Take the next train that leaves ten minutes later," volunteered the agent.

"What time does it get to Harrisburg?" asked the actor.

"Eight-fifty."

"Good Lord! Two hours later."

"That's right," replied the agent, with a smile.

For a fraction of a second Harris was on the point of giving up. Then he got an idea.

"All right. Give me a ticket on the freight," he said.



"With a feeling of triumph."

With his ticket in his hand he passed through the gate on to the platform where the slow train stood. Once away from the gateman he started to run. Near the engine he found a brakeman. "Where's the twenty-hour train?" he called.

"Three platforms over," replied the man, pointing. Let's see your ticket."

"Go to blazes!" called Harris, as he dashed across the tracks, "I haven't got time."

The express was gaining headway rapidly as Harris reached its side. A negro porter stood on the platform of the last Pullman, and to him the actor threw his dress suit case. Then he swung onto the lower step and made for the interior of the car.

The porter stopped him. "Where's your ticket?" he asked.

Though almost breathless, Harris drew himself up. "My good man," he said, "in due course I will display my ticket to the conductor. In the meanwhile you will deposit my valise in the section. Lower five."

"Yes, sah," said the negro, deeply impressed.

Not knowing whether "lower five" was already engaged or not, Harris decided that he would better make his way forward. At any rate he was on the train, but as he thought the matter over he concluded that he stood a good chance of being put off

at Trenton or some such place. His resourcefulness came to his aid again. "I'll get a shave," he said to himself. "I certainly need one."

In the traveling barber shop he divested himself of his coat, vest, collar and tie and the tonsorial artist went to work. When the shaving was half completed, the conductor made his appearance.

"Tickets, please."

"Oh!" said Harris, "my ticket's in my vest pocket."

"All right," said the conductor, "I'll be back in a few minutes."

Greatly to Harris' joy he did not return until the train had passed Trenton. When he came again, Harris gave up his ticket with utter unconcern. The conductor looked at it, and then at Harris.

"This ticket's no good on this train," he said.

"What's the matter with it?" inquired Harris, with well-feigned surprise.

"Only through tickets to Chicago are good on this train. You should have taken the train that left ten minutes later."

"Yes, but I've got to get to Harrisburg before seven o'clock." Harris was still in the barber chair.

"You can't do it," said the conductor.

"Can't I pay excess fare?"

"Not on this train."

"Well, I want to get a hair-cut, anyway," said Harris.



"Harris drew himself up."



"I'll have a shave."

"All right. Go ahead. I'll be back in a little while."

There was something so sinister in his tone that Harris scented lots of trouble ahead. He had his hair cut, and then sat down in one of the vacant chairs and lit a cigar. The conductor would be along again soon, he knew, but he was at a loss how to approach him.

Half an hour passed, but the conductor did not come. Harris wondered and looked out the window. "Must be near Philadelphia," he muttered, and then he saw his finish. The conductor would come after the train had stopped in Philadelphia and would request him to leave the train. He'd have to do it, too. There would be lots of willing hands to help him on his way if he resisted. Things looked black, but just then one of those bright ideas struck him.

"Barber," he said, "I was up all night last night and I had to run to catch this train. I'm feeling very damp and I believe I'll have a bath

and change some of my underclothes. Would you mind sending your boy back to the rear Pullman for my valise? And I guess you had better start to draw that bath at once."

Having a keen eye to business, the barber was nothing loath to obey. The dress suit case was duly brought, and as the train passed Germantown Junction, Harris entered the bath-room and disrobed.

He had been splashing about but a few minutes, when the train came to a standstill in the Philadelphia station. Harris went on splashing. Soon there came a knock at the door, which Harris apparently did not hear, for he splashed and splashed. The knock was repeated, more vigorously.

"Who's there?" asked Harris.

"Me," said a voice.

Seeking to gain time, Harris asked, "Who's me?"

"The conductor?" said the voice.



"The conductor looked just once."



"He knew that he was safe."

"Oh!" said Harris, "just a minute."

He got out of the tub and stood behind the door. He was dripping wet, and not a stitch of raiment had he on. Opening the door he thrust one bare, wet shoulder into the face of the astonished conductor.

"What is it?" he asked.

"You'll have to leave the train here," said that worthy. "I told you your ticket was no good on this train."

"But I've only just started to take

my bath. Well, I suppose it can't be helped."

He stood a moment thoughtfully, still seeking to gain time, while the conductor grew impatient.

"All right, old man," said Harris, at last. "I guess the game's up. Just hold the train ten minutes while I dress," he added, with cool assurance.

"You don't mean to say that you are entirely undressed?" inquired the astonished official.

"Sure," replied Harris, "Look!" and he opened the door wide.

The conductor looked, just once. "You're mighty fly," he said, and he walked away.

The train was well away from Philadelphia when Harris emerged from the bath-room, and made his way back to the Pullman. The next stop was Harrisburg, and he knew that he was safe. The conductor approached him later, with a smile on his face.

"You're a pretty smart guy," he said, "and you deserve to get to Harrisburg."

"Good," said Harris. "How much does the excess fare amount to?"

"Three dollars and sixty cents."

"Cheap, even with the bath," was the reply, "and anyway that bath was a mighty good one. Have a cigar?"





Her Story of Love

BY CHARLES MICHAEL WILLIAMS

When Margaret Cole entered the postoffice of the little North Carolina town she realized nothing but the bulky envelope in her letter box, for she saw, without at all noticing, the big young man standing near her whose rugged, ugly, good-natured face contrasted so oddly with the rather debonair sprig of arbutus in his buttonhole. The young man, however, I hasten to say, had eyes for more than his letters; and he looked, swiftly, interestedly—having his reasons for his action—at the girl as she turned away. He heard the postmaster, a genial soul whose talent for gossip was unrestrained by criticism, say: "That's Miss Cole. Literary lady. Sends lots of stuff to the magazines, and gets it back. Nice looking young lady, ain't she?"

The young man said, indeed she was, and walked out thoughtfully.

The "literary lady" wandered slowly down the sandy road leading into the pine woods, reading the letter that had come with her rejected manuscript from the editor of a magazine. It ran as follows:

"I think that there is nothing more difficult than to rewrite a story which in the first instance is not completely successful. We have had so many failures that I am extremely chary of giving advice of this kind to any contributor. In the present instance I do not feel that your story has been improved by rewriting. I am sorry, but I like your work too well to criticise it in any way but with perfect frankness."

Margaret's ears burned as if to

audible words of condemnation, and her face was flushed. A few weeks before she had sent the original draft of her story to this magazine, and it had been returned from the editor with a note that read: "This is a powerful story, and exceedingly well written, but its tone is scarcely in accord with that of the fiction that I like best to print. I should like to see more of your work."

These words had stirred our young woman like some rare cordial. Never before had her work been so noticed. She had, here and there, indeed, sold a story; but infrequent successes had only served to make more distinct the long, dreary frieze of failures they were set among—like splashes of sunrise color in a gray March sky. Now and then she made a palpable hit, but as blindly, as blunderingly, as a bullet hits in battle volleys. She was, however, the most persistent of markswomen and felt sure that in the end she would be placed with the sharpshooters.

At present she felt that she had made her worst miss of all. She had, hastily, as she now knew, thought that her story, in the first instance, had been returned because it ended "unhappily." Urged by a distressingly material reason—to be touched upon presently—she had written a "happy" ending and constructed a new beginning, and clapped the two upon the body of the story—as if she put a new wig on sad Pierrot to play Punchinello's part—and hurried it back to the magazine.

And the disappointment, the chagrin, the regret, she suffered now were but the culminations of the feelings for which she had blushed during the period since she had sent the lamed, disguised puppet of her fancy on its hasty journey in search of money.

Margaret's sense of wrong-doing, indeed, had been a painful obsession. She underlined her monologue of shame and put exclamation points at the end of her mental sentences of self-reproach. But all was genuine and heartfelt. She was very miserable as she walked slowly to her hotel in the waning twilight.

The negro porter was ringing the bell noisily up and down the veranda, and the guests were trooping into the bare, dingy dining-room. Margaret's passage through the hallway was obstructed by her landlord, who was angrily berating a slouching, embarrassed man. He was loudly saying:

"I pay my bills and I expect others to pay me. You promised me the money for that plough tonight, sure; and now here you are with another yarn. I won't stand it. I need the money. I want it. Now, you see here——"

Margaret slipped by and entered the dining-room. Her heart was beating painfully. Perhaps—nay, surely—such a scene was coming for her to undergo. The end of the month was very near.

Six months before she had been ordered South on account of a threatened affection of the lungs, and a general failing of health. She had gone to Asheville, first, but living there was too expensive for her slender means. For a time she had continued to earn a small weekly amount by writing a daily half column of paragraphs on "artistic and literary subjects" for a Boston newspaper;

but her absence from the city, and lack of contact with people she wrote about, and the want of fresh knowledge of the daily happenings which were of interest to the journal in question, had forced her to her own thoughts and emotions for material for "copy." Her editor promptly objected to the "gloomy" tone of her notes; Margaret, who had rather been pleased with her new tone, was angered; and, finally, the work was taken from her.

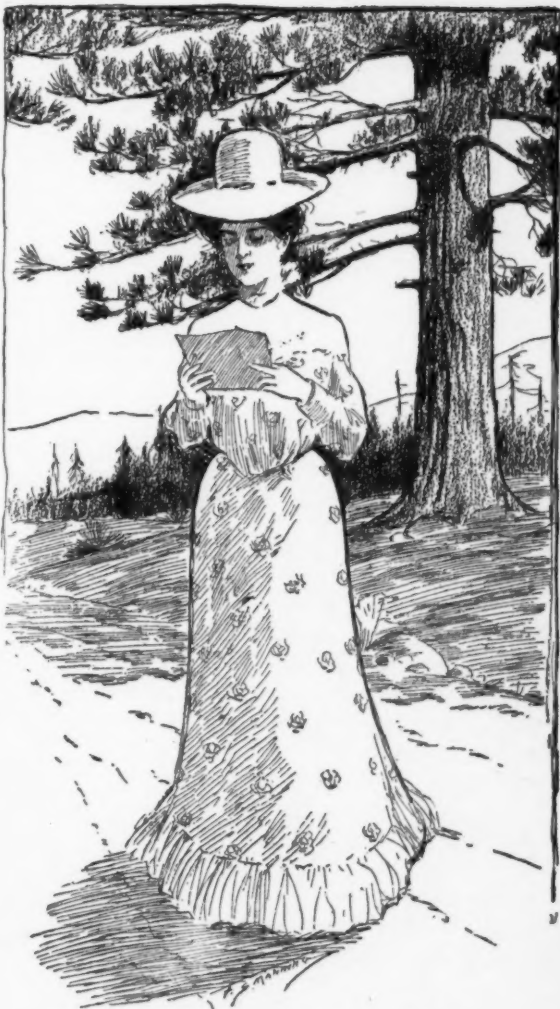
Then she had come to this place, which was village enough to be charmingly rustic, and town enough to be bustlingly prosperous. There was one daily newspaper, and Margaret had tried to obtain work, writing to the editor—who had been away—and submitting some of her matter. She had failed. The newspaper seemed to be devoted strenuously to politics. Her manuscripts were returned. The editor wrote that he didn't want literary and artistic notes; and that, "anyway, her tone was too high;" was not, in fine, "popular enough." Margaret, with angry tears, ripped the letter to pieces, saying, "Pig of a Philistine!"

She had managed to pay for her first month's board—the rate was low—but now she was nearly penniless. The stories she had sent away had all come back. She had scarcely enough money to send another; and, so far as their money value was concerned, there seemed small use in writing any more. Margaret's lonely life—father and mother were long dead and she had no other relative than an aunt who (it was one of the few amusing things of our young woman's life) considered her "dreadfully Bohemian"—had not been a happy or an easeful one, and she mirrored it, all unconsciously, in her tales. But editors did not want her grim and personal little trage-

dies, and Margaret had not yet learned that there were other stories in the world that could interest her. She could write of nothing but what did interest her. Now, love interested her; but her stories were all of hopeless passion, and fate spilled her sad lovers' cups of happiness ere they could drink therefrom. It was her turn of mind. She was sure—quite sure—that she herself should never love. "Art" was her spouse.

She took her place at one of the tables where noisy feeding prevailed. As she pulled her chair out she stopped, staring downward in surprise. By her plate there lay a mass of color, green and varied pink and creamy white: a great bunch of trailing arbutus, delicate as the cheeks of a child and fresh as a spring morning. Half hidden among the blooms was a scrap of paper with the following words written upon it: "Write a story about arbutus—a beautiful subject; write it in beautiful words. And do be cheerful. Consider; it is Spring!"

Warm blood flooded her pale, dark cheeks as she mechanically sat down. She suppressed her emotion and attended steadily to the concerns of the table. Around her sat many young men connected with the railroad yard and the cotton mills. It might have been one of these who had placed the flowers by her plate. But, no, for which one of these boisterous, hearty fellows would, could, have written the note? Of course,



"Wandered down the road reading the letter."

she knew it was the work of a man—her heart told her that. And there was a subtle wonder in that moment, there in the crowded, clattering dining-room—for she had never received flowers from a man before. The pipes of Pan were a-playing. Somehow the aching pain she had suffered that evening was lessened. Into the drab, dreary circle of her monotonous life a friendly hand had, as it were, reached to comfort and to compan-

ion her. Somewhere there was somebody who thought about her; who, perhaps—

She picked up her flowers and left the table and the room. Many eyes followed her slender, graceful form, which in the bland Southern air had bloomed wonderfully. She had been, although she knew it not, a much-discussed person in this little town. She was not nearly so unnoticed as she supposed.

She entered her bed-room, and again the pipes of Pan shrilled out. Big clusters of the sweet flowers stood on her rickety table, on the bureau, even on the unpainted little washstand. The dingy, bare, depressing place had been metamorphosed into a bower of color and fresh odor.

Margaret rang the hand bell sharply. The grinning negro porter appeared.

She demanded to know: "Who put those flowers here?"

"Ah declah Ah doan't know'm."

"You didn't?"

"Ah shuah didn't."

"Did the landlord, Mr. Martin?"

"Ah reckon not'm. Mr. Martin he doan't give flowers to de bo'ders'm."

Margaret could well believe this statement. She gave up her interrogations hopelessly. She felt sure, however, that had she a coin of sufficient value to slip into the shuffling porter's hand, she should easily buy him from his present purchased lying.

But, after all, why should she question? Why not merely accept and enjoy the charming gift, and ask nothing as to whence it came or why it had been sent to her. She sat by the open window with the lovely flowers all about her. "Write a story about arbutus," the unknown giver had said. Why not? Would not an artist see the germ of a story

in the episode, and pass by the personal side? "Arbutus" would certainly make an attractive title. Singularly enough, too, the already twice-rejected story had something of the kind in it—an unknown young man who sent flowers to a lonely, invalid girl, out of his pity. And the girl had pined away, longing for sight of, and filled with love for, her benefactor, and had at the last died with her desire unsatisfied. Now, if this young man were made to fall in love with the girl—

Ah, to be sure, our young woman knew she was an "artist"—but she was yet a woman. She flushed; a dim smile parted her lips—lifted the sad, habitual droop of them to a charming curve—and she pressed a blossom to her face. For the first time in many, many days she was not a writer in loneliness brooding over words and ideas—she was a pretty girl dreaming of love in the gloaming. She leaned from her open window.

The evening was balmy with the air of Spring, which comes to the Southland as summer comes to the North—bedecked with flowers and warm with sun. The air was surcharged with balsamic odors distilled from the tall pine trees whose plumed tops nodded in the lazy wind against the slowly darkening sky. One by one the big, soft stars were coming out and the earth-stars—the lights of homes—sprinkled the purple dusk. From afar off there came the twanging of a guitar, and the low voices of passers-by in the street blended harmoniously with the endless stir of locusts. The sky behind the eastern hill hinted of the new moon. The thought of peace and of contentedness was suggested by the hamlet as the day of work faded into the night of rest.

Margaret's eyes grew dim. She

was more nearly attuned to this dominant note of restfulness to-night than ever she had been; but still, the serene influence of it all pointed out the contrast in her case. This place of homes had no home for her. The day had been a day of work, indeed, but to what end? And rest?—how was she to rest with the specters of dread and of anxiety always by her side?

The gentle night put out a hand to soothe her. The full moon arose and bathed the world in silver dreams. There was a murmuring of low, lazy voices. A group of men came beneath her window and looked up. Some one said: "Hyah's the spot—dis hyah song's a funny one, but Ah reckon we can manage it if de boss wants it. He pays de money an' we do de rest. Now, boys!" There was a rough, rhythmic snapping of stringed instruments and then, rudely, but oddly, exotically, melodious, negro voices sang:

"My love's waitin',
Waitin' by the river,
Waitin' till I come along!
Wait there, child, I'm comin'."

Margaret shrank from the window, her pensive thoughts scattered to the four winds. What did this mean? Was this serenade meant for her? Whose minstrels were these?

"Jay bird tol' me,
Tol' me in the mornin',
Tol' me she'd be there to-night;
Wait there, child, I'm comin'."

Timidly she again crept to the window and peered out. She could see nothing but the moon-lighted faces of the singers, four men in whom she recognized wandering singers she had seen before. Perhaps this was not meant for her at all—was merely a device of the landlord's to add to the attractions of his

inn—ah, but her pulses denied the thought!

"Whip-po'-will tol' me,
Tol' me in the evenin',
Down by the bend where the
cat-tails grow;

* Wait there, child, I'm comin'."

By and by, after a song or two more, the singers departed. Margaret undressed in the fragrant gloom and went to bed. Write about arbutus? she thought. Surely he who had suggested it was supplying plenty of incident and of "local color". Thus did our young woman play hypocrite with her beating heart, which did not dream of stories that night.

The morning mail brought a letter. It was from the editor of the local newspaper. It ran: "I have been thinking over your idea of a literary column for the *Argus*, and we may be able to come to some agreement. Will you call at the office some time at your convenience? Very truly yours, Caspar White."

Margaret was as one in a dream all that morning. What was happening, thus, all at once, causing such a turning of the tide? What influence was at work in her behalf? . . . Her inner, secret heart asked, "Who?" instead of "What."

That afternoon she went to the office of the *Argus*. When her card was brought to the editor, that young man hastily took a sprig of arbutus from his button-hole and hid it. Margaret thought him really the most chilly and dry of men, for a big, ruddy young fellow, she had ever encountered. She thought, too, that it was a pity he stammered. Caspar White's friends and political constituents would have

* The foregoing verses are from "More Songs from Vagabondia" by Bliss Carmen and Richard Hovey.

been amazed if they had known of this latter clause of her impression of the young congressman.

Only once did he speak out clearly. It was after terms had been agreed upon, the liberality of which surprised Margaret. She said: "I think it is right to tell you that I shall not be here very long, as I intend to return North in June." He jumped up to his splendid height and cried: "Oh, but you mustn't go away so soon, Miss Cole!"

In a day or two Margaret was surprised to think that she had supposed her chief to be afflicted with any difficulty with his speech, for the freedom and the fluency with which he criticised her work were only exceeded, in Margaret's opinion, by his crass "Philistinism." They fought and wrangled.

"Be cheerful!" the editor of the *Argus* cried. "Let your work, at all events, be cheerful."

The eloquent arguments of the apostle of "Art for art's sake, and hang the subject"—to be colloquial—would take too much time and space to report; but her attitude might be summed up thus—in reply to her editor's admonition—"I won't!"

His mental reply to this, it would seem, was: "I'll make you!"

One morning Margaret received one of her frequent and mysterious presents of flowers, with a note that ran: "I am reading your work in the *Argus* gladly. The editor of the *New York Magazine* has told me what good work you could do if you would not be obsessed by unnecessary gloom, and it seems to me that your *Argus* work shows that you are becoming brighter and happier. When, then, shall I see your story about arbutus?"

When Margaret came to the office that day she acted so queerly, she

carried her head so high, she "turned in" a column of such unrelieved "pessimism," that the burly young editor was affected by it all in singular way—once or twice the eyes of his dusky office boy fairly bulged to see his "boss" stuff a pocket handkerchief into his mouth and shake in his chair with stifled laughter, his face encrimsoned. He printed Margaret's column, however.

The bouquet of arbutus was more magnificent than ever next morning and the note said: "You are really growing happy in spite of yourself. Your column this morning was a deliberate turning on of artificial tears. I shall read 'Arbutus' yet."

She was too angry to eat her breakfast.

It was in the afternoon when she left the hotel for the office. As she walked swiftly along the sunny street, suddenly she was overcome by the surprise of her present state of health; she realized for the first time how strong and well she was, and the fragrant, buoyant air was as wine in her veins. She threw her eyes up from the ground—she had been pondering the wording of a paragraph—and at that moment she saw Caspar White. He was striding across the roadway toward a charmingly pretty girl who sat on a horse before a shop. He lifted his hat; his hand met the girl's, and she bent down to him; his face was lifted to her—his ugly, likable face, and something in the atmosphere of the swift little scene turned the bright day drab for Margaret Cole. She turned away; she hurried through her work in the office—Caspar White did not appear; she could guess where he was—and shortly before sunset she left the office and walked into the woods.

It was there, in the cool, dusky, murmuring aisles among the giant

pines, that in the old, the dark days, she had carried her suffering heart; and there she went now; and the spirit of loneliness walked with her. She did not know why she now suffered; why the tears suffused her eyes and singular pain throbbed in her bosom. She did not consciously think of Caspar White—and she thought not at all of the unknown giver of flowers, the presumptuous person who had tried to arrange the materials of a "happy" story for her to write . . . and who had succeeded

in arranging one for her to suffer in.

"Happy stories!" There were no happy stories—that is, no true ones; none in life: in her life, at least—and with the tears of that thought in her eyes she rounded a gigantic pine that stood on the brow of a gentle declivity and faced Caspar White, who was on his knees amid a bed of arbutus, one hand holding a great bunch of the blooms. He leaped to his feet and dropped the flowers at the sight of her startled, tear-stained face—and Margaret shrank back from him, suddenly knowing all.



"On his knees amid a bed of arbutus."

And Caspar White relapsed into his stammering, but his stammerings were the fiery, rushing words of passion, his confusion was the divine confusion of love, and on the great flood of it Margaret was carried warmly to his heart.

"Caspar, dear," she whispered, "how I love you!"

It was later, and he said: "Now you will write 'Arbutus'? Your story of happy love?"

"Ah, no," she said—"to live it is enough."



CATALINA'S SPECIAL PROVIDENCE

By

HELEN PALMER.

I had fallen asleep about eleven, calmly and comfortably, after a lively game of basket-ball in the "Gym," followed by a refreshing needle bath. I was not ill and I was not dreaming, and I woke suddenly to hear a voice calling "Catalina!" in a low, eager whisper. My name is Alexandra and my chum, whose regular breathing told me that she was fast asleep in the alcove opposite, is Cornelia. Who was it? And what did it mean?

Holding my breath, I gazed intently in the direction from which the pleading voice seemed to come, and out of the darkness, a figure grew. It was the figure of a man, young and slender, straining towards me in an attitude of passionate eagerness, yet motionless as a statue, but for the nervous twitching of the thin, dark face and the trembling of the lips. The eyes were closed.

I rose on my elbow to call for help, but a sudden moonbeam struck across the room from the high window and I saw it pass through the figure as if it had been a pane of glass. I fell back, clutching my throat with both hands. Call out and have the whole college laughing at me, I would not! So I set my chattering teeth and lay still.

"Catalina!" the low voice implored, "listen to me! I must see you! I go away again to Cuba. I

try to see you to write to you—it is no use—they will not let me. So I try this way. Catalina! my treasure! do not be frightened, but try to come to your Guillermo!"

I had closed my eyes in my terror, and when I opened them he was gone. I tried to call Cornelia, but my mouth was dry; I could not make a sound; so I threw my pillow at her. It was a relief to hear it strike the wall with a dull, natural thud; and I continued to throw whatever I could reach until she roused and asked, sleepily, "What's the row?"

"Come over here, Cornelia," I said. If she was surprised at my seizing her arm as soon as she was within reach, and drawing her down beside me, she made no sign. Cornelia is well trained: we have not lived together for three college years for nothing. She looked at me closely, and said:

"If it were anybody but you, Lex, I should think you were going to faint. Let me go and call Mrs. Harris."

"No, no," I cried, "not if you love me! Just give me your salts and camp down here by me and I'll be all right directly."

It was hard not to tell Cornelia; the words were trembling on my lips, but though the dear girl is discretion itself, the awful prospect of having a ghost story connected with

me—me! Alexandra Dallas, hard-headed captain of the college basketball team, was too appalling to face, and I held my tongue.

By morning I had recovered my nerve; evidently I was the victim of a particularly vivid dream. So I took up the day's routine and went into psychology class as usual at eleven.

Miss Playfair was discussing after-images, and referring to some experiments of the Society for Psychical Research, took a little flight into the realms of hypnotism. I was rather struck with the alleged fact that images and writings seen in trance or in magic mirrors or crystals are reversed; and was amused at the instances of confusion of dates that has followed when mediums neglected to bear this in mind. It seemed so absurd that a natural law should bob up in the midst of such supernatural proceedings. But I shuddered as I thought of the night before, and looked about for something to divert my mind.

The girl sitting near me in the back row—where I had purposely isolated myself—was a stranger to me; I looked her over idly, wondering how a freshman came to be in that class. She was a little thing, but alert and self-possessed; and catching my eye, she smiled in so friendly a way that I edged up nearer and presently handed her a pad, across which was written my name and address, "Alexandra Dallas, 81 South Hall." She took the pad, smiling and nodding, and my eyes followed her hand as she formed the words, "Catalina Baxter, 18 South Hall."

A cold shiver ran through me, and scarcely knowing what I did, I leaned over and seizing the pencil, added "Catalina and Guillermo."

I don't know what I expected, but

what happened was that the girl went deadly pale and fell in a little heap against my shoulder. Half an hour later, she was lying, still pale, but quite composed, among the pillows of my couch, and I was apologizing humbly for giving her such a shock.

"Never mind," she said, impatiently, "that is nothing, but tell me, please, what you know."

"I know nothing," I began, and then, hesitatingly at first, but faster as she began to put in excited little cries of recognition, I told her the story of my dream.

"It was no dream!" she declared, "it was Guillermo! If I only knew where to find him, he should never go back to Cuba without me! But why did he come to you and not to me?"

"I am sure I can't imagine," I said, weakly, feeling myself embarked on unknown seas; and just then my eyes fell upon the pad, lying where it had been dropped.

"See," said I, "18—81. Did he have your address?"

"No," she answered, "they kept it from him; he must have got it in some other way."

"Some other way? Through a medium perhaps?"

"Yes," she nodded.

"Then it's plain enough they forgot that 81 reversed reads 18."

"Of course!" she cried. "How clever of you! Then he'll come again and we must find out where he is. You'll let me see him, won't you?" she pleaded, clasping her hands about my arm.

I hesitated a moment. It scarcely seemed to be my duty to chaperon Miss Baxter and her phantom lover.

"But how crazy of me!" she resumed, quickly. "You don't know in the least what it is all about. Let me tell you: My home is in

Colorado—or was—for my father and mother both died five years ago, and I have had no home since—only existence in one boarding-school after another, under the surveillance of some persons who are, unfortunately, my distant cousins and the only relatives I have. Their name is Hobbs, and there are three of them: Cousin Cortex Hobbs, Cousin Sarah Hobbs, and worst of all, their son, Algernon Hobbs. I say 'worst of all,' because that is where the trouble comes in. My father left me—his poor little only child—a large fortune, and the Hobbs family have decided that Algernon shall marry it.

"But they have reckoned without me," she continued, her blue eyes flashing and the color rising in her small, eager face, "and they have reckoned without Guillermo! He is the dearest fellow!" she murmured, after a moment's pause, during which her eyes had grown soft again; "you must meet him. Really, I mean, of course. How scared you look! You will let me see him to-night, won't you? I know he'll come back—and I believe you have been sent expressly to help us."

I felt that it was a heavy responsibility I was taking, but if a ghostly guest was to be expected at midnight, it would certainly be reassuring to have some one present who knew him and looked upon his coming as a joyful event. Besides it was probably all "jolly rot," I reflected, and no miracles would happen. So I said "Yes," and arranged with the patient Cornelia that Miss Catherine Baxter—she was Catalina only for Guillermo—should occupy her share of our rooms for a night or two.

Skeptic though I was, my new friend's excitement was contagious and I also grew impatient as the mystic hour drew near. All the evening we talked about Guillermo,

or rather, Catalina talked and I listened. Just before midnight we put out the light and waited in a dead silence.

Ten minutes later we saw him: he looked even more anxious and eager than the night before, but at his first word came an answering cry of "Guillermo!" and his face lighted up with rapturous joy.

"I have found you!" he cried.

"Yes, yes! but don't come nearer, dearest, or you will frighten this kind friend who is going to help us," she whispered, leaning forward.

Guillermo looked bewildered, but in a moment she had explained, and he was bowing and smiling with his heels brought well together, while I had mechanically acknowledged the presentation of "El Señor Don Soto y Corona," my gaze being riveted upon the clock standing on my desk just back of him, and plainly visible through the wide expanse of his white shirt front.

Miss Catalina Baxter was a born manager, and within five minutes a carefully planned programme had been arranged. It was well that she was rapid, for already Guillermo's outlines were beginning to blur, and before the minute hand had moved three points nearer the middle button there was nothing left but a misty film, above which floated for an instant a yearning smile and then all vanished into thin air.

"I am afraid I forgot a good deal," said Catalina, after a moment's pause, "but never mind, I can tell him to-morrow night. We sha'n't leave until day after to-morrow anyway."

"Shall you see him—here?" I questioned, meekly, awed by her calmness, "or did you explain to him about the number—18—you know?"

"It wasn't worth while, there was so much that was important to settle

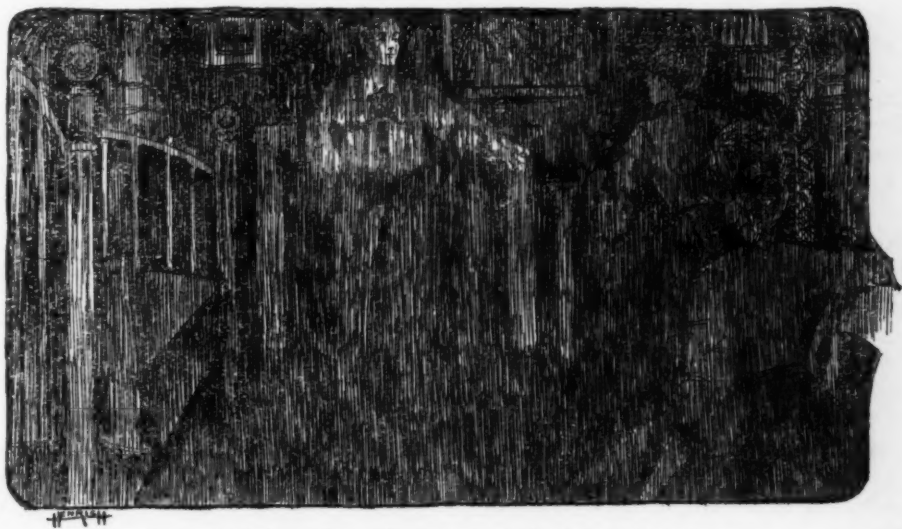
in such a short time," she answered, cheerfully. "So, if you please, I'll see him here."

If I must play gooseberry to this ghostly love-making, I would satisfy my conscience at least by making some rational inquiries, and the Spanish Consul seemed the best person to apply to: accordingly I plucked up my courage, went into the city, and called upon him. He was evidently surprised at my youth—considering my errand. And I needed every bit of my upper-class dignity

friend! What so happy chance brought you here?"

Fortunately he did not wait for an answer, but went on, smiling radiantly, "I must thank you so much and also apologize for the fright I have given you. It is very lucky," he added in an undertone, "that you are a sensitive."

I a "sensitive"! I was beginning to hate him! But he made no more occult allusions, having to explain to the Consul, who was looking mystified.



"Guillermo's outlines were beginning to blur."

in order to properly impress him. But at last we got down to business, and I learned with satisfaction that Catalina's lover not only existed beyond a doubt, but was "as fine a fellow as ever lived," and came of an eminently respectable Havana family.

"There he is now," said the Consul, advancing toward the door, and before I could escape, Señor Soto y Corona was being presented to me in the flesh. When he heard my name he gave a great start and cried out:

"You are my little Catalina's good

"This lady," he said, "is Miss Baxter's friend and will bring her here to-morrow for the wedding. Is it not so?" he added, turning with the pleading smile now familiar to me, and I hastened to answer "Yes."

Before I left, all the details of the plan Catalina had proposed were settled, and I ventured to suggest that in view of the exciting day before the runaway bride, who would not feel safe from possible attacks by the irate Hobbsses until she was lawfully Mrs. Señor Don Guillermo, it would be well for him to omit his

midnight call. He agreed rather ruefully, and laden with many messages for the Señorita, I traveled back to the college.

Luckily I had the sense not to tell that young lady that the omission of her lover's visit was due to me, and her disappointment soon vanished in the excitement of planning for the great event.

The next day was a long one in spite of our efforts to make the packing of the naturally limited trousseau a matter of vital interest. We were nearly two hours ahead of time when we reached the Consul's office. Cornelia, now a confidant, was with us. I was prepared to blush at this unseemly haste, but not so the bride.

"See, there is Guillermo!" she cried, clapping her hands; and sure enough, the bridegroom elect was hanging half out of the Consul's window and eagerly scanning the street. In a moment more he had met us and we were engaged in a discussion of the best means of passing the time intervening before the hour set for the wedding. I counseled waiting where we were, as the wiser course, but Catalina had set her heart on a drive in the park—and of all things in an automobile.

"It shall be an automobile, Catalina *mia*!" cried Guillermo, gaily. And five minutes later, in a very big machine, brilliant with scarlet paint, we were dashing down one of the principal avenues.

"Don't you think it would be safer to select some more secluded street? Remember, the Hobbsses are in town," I ventured to Guillermo, after a time. But success had made him reckless.

"Courage! my dear lady," he answered, "it is but an hour!" And then he turned again to the contemplation of Catalina, whose flaming

pink cheeks and dancing eyes made a very pretty picture.

But suddenly her pink cheeks went white and she cowered against my shoulder.

"What is it?" we cried, and our eyes followed hers as she gasped, "Oh, make him go faster! Can't we go faster?"

On the steps of the Grand Hotel stood a lady and a gentleman whom I identified at once as Cousin Sarah Hobbs and Algernon. They were staring at us open-mouthed, as they well might do, considering the circumstances; for Catalina was tearfully imploring the chauffeur to make greater haste, whilst Guillermo, standing, for greater emphasis, was reenforcing her in a wild mixture of Spanish and English.

Cousin Sarah Hobbs was evidently not the woman to linger over a decision and before we turned the corner leading toward the freer expanse of the park, I saw her call an automobile and jump into it, followed by her son.

"They are after us," I said to Cornelia, "it is going to be a race."

"I know it," she responded, briefly, "we shall very likely all be pitched out and killed, but there is nothing to do but see it through." Cornelia is a brick.

In a minute or two more the other auto—it was a yellow one—came hissing and clanging into view. Algernon was sitting up very straight, feigning unconsciousness and looking stolid behind the monocle which was screwed into his eye. But not so Cousin Sarah: she was leaning forward, her thin face grim and strained; and I felt that if she once got her grip on little Catalina, it would be a cruel one.

It was early, fortunately; there were few carriages in the park and our race bid fair to be uninterrupted,



"In a minute more the other auto came into view."

for a time at least. We went spinning down the road, the trees whizzed past in a zig-zag line, yet the yellow auto was gaining on us slowly but surely. Cornelia and I, holding our breath, sat forward on the edge of the seat; Catalina lay silent and tense with her eyes fixed on Guillermo; and he, his hat gone and his dark hair crisping in the rush of air, alternately bent above the chauffeur to urge him on, and turned to hurl back scorn at Algernon.

"They will run into us!" I cried at last, frightened into catching at Guillermo's arm.

"No!" he shouted back, "we will run into them!" And seizing the

lever from the chauffeur, whom he pushed aside, planting himself in fact fairly on top of him, he guided the thumping machine round a dizzy curve into one of the streets which give exit from the park.

Our pursuers followed. They took a still shorter turn, bringing them almost abreast of us, and I closed my eyes in horror as I saw Guillermo drive at a sharp angle alongside of them. The wheels interlocked, there was a terrible jolt and jar, and why we weren't all killed I do not understand. But we managed to get out of the tangled-up machine, and extricate ourselves from the crowd that had instantly

gathered; and before a policeman had arrived on the scene, Guillermo had caught a couple of hansoms and we were whirling away towards the haven of the Consul's office.

"Thank Goodness, we're out of this alive!" said Cornelia.

"And without Cousin Sarah Hobbs' blood on our hands," I added, fervently. "She was dancing about and shrieking for a policeman when we got away, and Algernon was fishing for his monocle!"

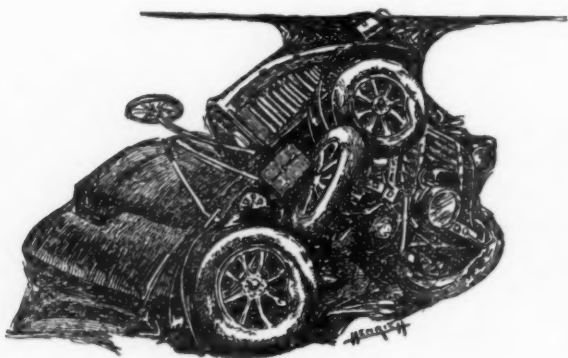
Guillermo, still flushed with victory, received us at the office door.

"You have courage! you American ladies! But courage—how do you say?—to burn!" he cried gaily. "I was quite sure we were so heavy we could stop that machine, besides, we were not going so fast as it seemed. And no one is hurt, eh?—not even that Cousin Sarah Hobbs! Nor Mr. Algernon!" —He made a little grimace. "I will send money to pay for the machines by and by when we are safe at home. And so, 'All is well that ends well,' is it not true?"

The Consul and the priest were waiting, and Catalina had recovered her roses and her spirits. So the wedding ceremony began without delay. Guillermo was very nervous, to be sure, and suddenly forgot all his English at the most critical moment; the bride's hat was crushed out of all semblance to any known headgear; Cornelia's was rakishly cocked over one ear; and mine was gone entirely. But we were a very joyous wedding party for all that, until the last kiss was bestowed, and the last good wish spoken, and the happy pair were being whirled away en route to Paradise—or Cuba.

Then Cornelia and I smoothed each other's battered plumage as best we could, and took our way back to college by the most unfrequented road.

I am not a "sensitive", thank heaven! for I have had no more midnight visitations. I prefer to think that I was for once what Catalina called me: "A special Providence."





You have noticed how the blackberries hang on the branches by the roadside in summer time—big, luscious blackberries for the passer-by? But this is your little mistake; they are not hanging there for the passer-by, but for the stopper-at! And so all along the pathway of life the big, ripe berries of good fortune are hanging, and they are for the stopper-at.

There is a happy little story which you may want to hear—the story of a man who, after years of passing-by and not getting anything, mended his ways later in life and became a stopper-at.

He was of uneasy age, neither old nor young; and he felt it to be one of his most serious misfortunes that by the calendar he was inclined favorably in that direction which he was least inclined to favor. You grasp my meaning, my clever young reader? He would have preferred to grow younger, if change there need be; but of necessity he was growing older. It is said that in certain countries of the Orient all men are confronted with this same unpleasant circumstance sooner or later in life; but even a teller of stories cannot be certain of all that goes on in the most remote regions of the globe, and our friend Mr. Bacon says we must read, not to take for granted, but to "weigh and consider."

Fact number two in regard to our middle-aged hero: He was "hard up." You have heard the phrase before, gentle reader? A local

phrase, I believe, used only in English-speaking countries, and yet, as it were, a very speaking phrase! He was hard up. Not that business was slow in his town, O no! His newspaper had a guaranteed circulation of I don't know how many thousand; and as for advertisements, why it was crowded, so crowded that oftentimes the firms who advertised on the same page actually fell out! But it takes money to run a paper of that sort, and Ferguson's paper had absorbed the last of his bank account some time since.

Now I know there are people in and out of school who would remark right here that he did not "manage" well, or his paper would have paid its own expenses and his too. He did not "manage" at all, for he was not a "manager." Can a man manage a business and write poetry, gossip, and the like? Could you? And when one man attends to the business and another to the furnishing of the cash for it, what would you expect? or have you never seen it tried?

And the third fact in regard to our hero—an unfortunate man he truly was—but, as I explained before, through all the years of his life he had been a passer-by; the third fact, patient reader, he was in love! This also is a common misfortune in the lives of middle-aged men. We read somewhere about young men seeing visions, and old men dreaming dreams, but the middle-aged men, we may add, are likely to have the real thing. And so had he!

In love with whom? You have heard of the Divine She? It was She, of course; at least that is what he called her, that and Christine. What did she look like? There are Lady-Novelistes who could tell you, but I really cannot. I'm fond of looking at the ladies, to be sure, but to describe one! And one like Christine!

My impression upon seeing her was that she was neither tall nor short, neither stout nor thin. It seems to me she was both gay and serious. Her complexion was either dark or fair, I'm not sure which. But her eyes! There were never eyes in a picture to equal them, or out of a picture either! They were eyes to haunt men in their dreams, and even at the breakfast table, with the coffee all poured out and getting cold.

Christine was a beautiful woman, but she had no money, nor had the hero, and neither had the fortitude to face the fire of frolicsome facetiousness forthcoming from fashionable friends, should they follow their foolish fancy and finally fall to freezing in fictitious finery, feebly feasting on phantom fare in some futilely furnished flat.

It was by making paragraphs similar to the one just written that Ferguson had won himself a reputation as a literary man. By this method, also, it is said, he had added thousands of new subscribers to his list. Yet he was not rich.

He would not marry Christine without money; and while he waited the months passed, and he was not growing younger. To be sure, there was comfort in the fact that she who had been worshipped by a score of men, rich, handsome, "desirable," should prefer *him* and wait for *him*; but in even this there was misfortune, for how could he show her his

gratitude? And would she continue to wait patiently for him, with every other man she met at her command? It was too good to last! If she had been less attractive, our hero would have been less troubled in his mind; but did not every discriminating man admire Christine and follow her about? And would not Christine forget herself some day and, and—but he would become excited at this point and his thoughts become somewhat muddled.

But one day his thoughts became clear at this very point; he saw the blackberry hanging by the roadside, and the Unfortunate One became the Stopper-At!

Several years had passed since the Unfortunate One had met with the Prosperous Ones of the Silver-Plate Club. In fact, he had not hung around there since the day his last good handful of cash had withdrawn itself from his trousers pocket. Neither had his breezy blond voice been heard in the merry and exclusive Song-Song Club since that same gloomy day.

But this is what he did when he decided to become a Stopper-At: He secured a new dress suit—no matter how he got it; those things are managed every day, even in your own neighborhood, gentle reader—and then he threw himself headlong into the very orchestra row of Society. The Silver-Plate Club and the Song-Song Club stared for a moment, then flung him the glad hand. At reception, dinner and dance he was a center of attraction, for the Divine One was always by his side.

After a while the Divine One was often away from his side. Churchill, the millionaire soap-maker, and Simpson, the banker, were chiefly favored, for they chanced to be among the discriminating ones, and

both were amiable men. Churchill invited her to the opera, and she went in style. Ferguson, the Unfortunate One, sighed sadly with both hands on his heart; but he did not say, "You must not go, Christine; I do not like it!"

after the coaching party. The Unfortunate One seemed to stand every chance of losing his fair prize, but to whom no one could guess. The soap-maker and the banker continued to be the favored ones among all her new admirers; but theirs



"The unfortunate one became The Stopper-At."

Simpson asked her to be his guest on a holiday coaching trip, and she went in grand style. Ferguson had faltered and fumed, even wishing himself dead; but he did not once say, "Christine, you must not go; I cannot bear it!"

And so it went on for some weeks

seemed to be a neck and neck race. Who would come out ahead? and how? and when? and was she not already engaged to the Unfortunate One?

These questions were playing tag in the minds of the Favored Two on a certain noon, as they stepped into

the club lunch room from opposite entrances. A group surrounding the bulletin board showed signs of being unusually entertained, and the Two joined the group. They recognized each other, it was noted; but Churchill's nod was of the sort a man gives another who has been owing him a small sum of money for a long time; and Simpson returned the salutation in a manner that might easily have indicated that he remembered himself to be the very same man who owed that small sum. As a matter of fact, of course, neither owed the other anything; but each had a most unaccountable feeling that there was a little something to be settled between them, and "as a man thinketh in his heart" so is it, is it not?

Together they read the following announcement:

"J. C. Ferguson, a member of this club, and citizen of your fair city, desires a change of climate and scene, and he is without means of escape, which means without cash. If any gentleman or gentlemen, generously disposed, will favor him with a small package of gold coin, say twenty thousand dollars, before to-morrow, Wednesday, night, he will agree to quit the city and the state, immediately and finally on the morning of Thursday, the day following."

There were men who did not see the point, but there were two who did, and they looked curiously into each other's face for about ten seconds or less.

Churchill was thinking, "Will he do it? Will he share that investment with me?"

Simpson was thinking, "We have a like interest in this. Will he invest his ten thousand, and share the chance with me?"

They lunched at the same table.

A few words were exchanged, and they parted more cordially than they had met.

That evening there was a meeting of three men and a stenographer in the office of the millionaire soap-maker. An agreement was written and signed, and a little sack of gold pieces changed hands; and three expectant, well-pleased men said good-night at the door.

Wednesday passed quietly. Some one saw J. C. Ferguson at the tailor's, paying a bill long over-due. In the evening Simpson called to see the Divine One, and went home in a most hopeful frame of mind because of her graciousness. "How magnificent her eyes were to-night! How simple and sincere she is with me! Surely I understand her better than Ferguson or Churchill ever could! To-morrow Ferguson will be gone. Churchill will soon fall out of the race; I'll see that he does!" And then his exultant mood gave place to a kindlier one, and he began to pity his unfortunate friend. "Poor Churchill! I never knew him to lose on an investment before. As a business proposition, he'll take it very hard. But one of us has to lose, and he won't miss the money. He doesn't care half so much for her as I do, and couldn't begin to make her as happy as I shall. Poor fellow; it's too bad he has to lose though."

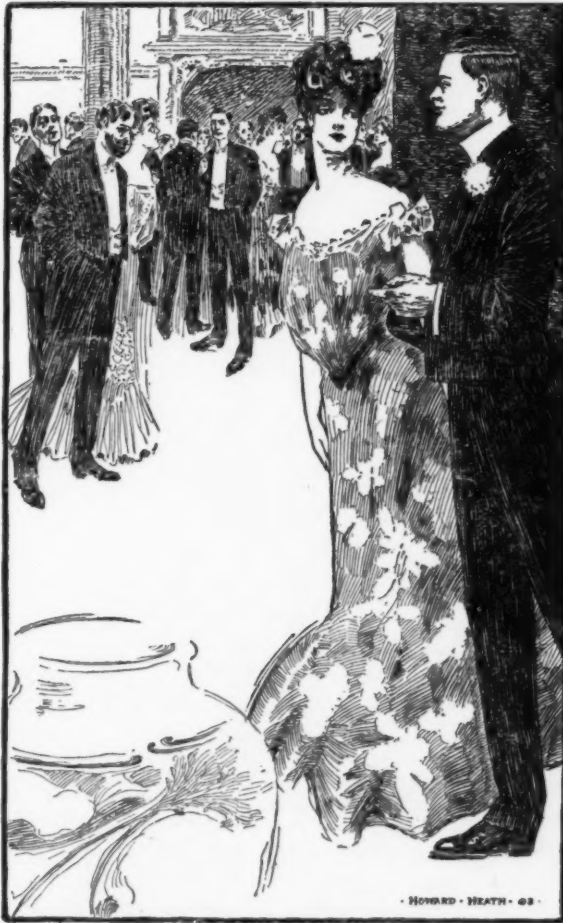
Churchill smoked lazily in his room that night, with his feet propped up before a blazing fire, and his gaze resting on a most satisfactory portrait of Her, which stood before him on the mantel shelf.

"Poor Simpson," he mused; "he'll take it pretty hard, I suppose, being such a sentimental, soft-hearted chap. He doesn't seem to see that she is entirely wrapped up in me,

and only tolerates him because she is kind-hearted. He won't mind losing the ten thousand; I fancy he'll never think of it at all; but when he sees me step off with the little lady he'll take that very hard, very hard. Poor Simpson! It's too bad!"

were married at the residence of Rev. Dr. Booklet, and left on the overland train for an extended tour in the East."

There was more, but Simpson did not read it. He placed his spoon carefully in his saucer, and left the



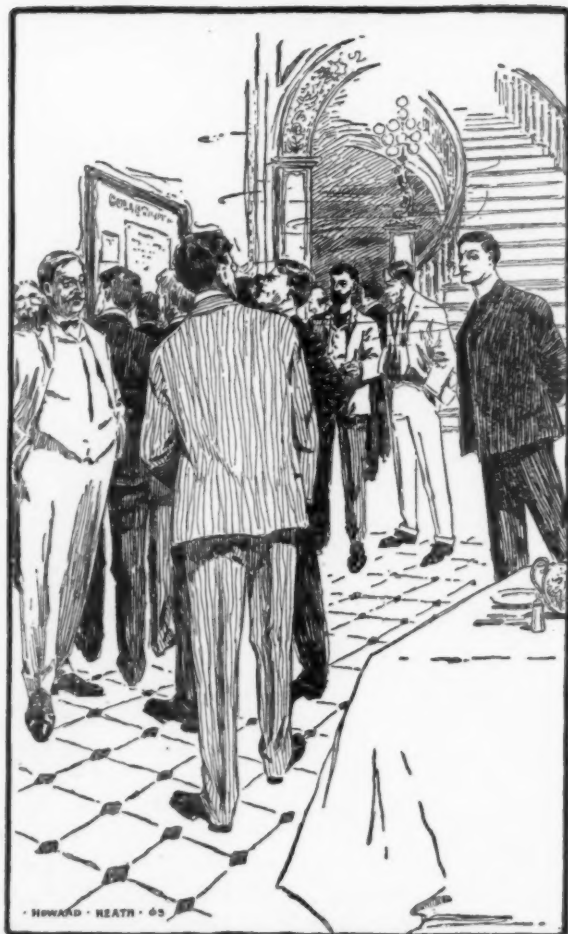
"The Divine One was always by his side."

Thursday evening Simpson looked over the *Evening Teller*, Ferguson's own paper, which he had not been able to manage himself, and a paragraph caught his eye:

"This morning early, J. C. Ferguson and Miss Christine Davidson

steaming tea to cool, while he himself took a little cool air in the street.

After a prolonged walk in various directions and back, his steps turned naturally enough toward the club; but as he was about to turn in at the entrance he remembered Churchill,



"A group surrounding the bulletin board."

and suddenly hurried away. Six minutes later Churchill passed the same entrance, having had no previous intention of passing; but he thought of Simpson, and hastened on. He did not want to meet Simpson.

So the Silver-Plate Club lost two valued members, and the two valued members lost twenty thousand; but the Unfortunate One had become a Stopper-At, and all went well with him!

Jemima's Venture

BY L. E. SCHULTE

Miss Jemima Jenkins, after more than forty years of spinsterhood, was weary of the odium attaching to that unfortunate state. It was not, as she said to herself, that she had "any use for a man, or hankered to have one 'round, but somehow folks seemed to think more of you if you was Mrs. instead of Miss. No," said Miss Jenkins, "what I want is to be a widder, an' then folks couldn't say as Jemima Jenkins never had a chance, 'poor thing,' which is aggravatin', whether it's true or whether it ain't."

Jemima's chance came at last. One day Astley was thrown into excitement by the announcement that her uncle who lived in New York was ill, and wanted her to go and "visit with him a spell." As became a good niece Jemima went, and attended faithfully to the wants of the cranky old man, meditating much as she did so on the peculiarities of the male sex collectively, as evinced in this one unfortunate example. However, after a couple of months he departed this life, and Jemima found that he had left her, his only relative, a sum that was in Astley eyes a decided fortune.

The day after the funeral she was seated before a cheery fire sipping a cup of tea, and meditating in great contentment on the joys of being a woman of means, when suddenly the inspiration of her life came to her. "My!" she exclaimed, "if that ain't a fine idee. I'll do it, sure," and she lay back in her chair and laughed heartily.

Not many days after, Mrs. Gorman, Jemima's dearest friend, came rushing into Mrs. Mills' house, while that lady was lingering over a late

cup of tea, for, as she said, "You didn't rightly get the taste of your vittles till you got the men folks off of a morning, with their hurry and fuss over this and that."

"Land alive! Mrs. Mills," she exclaimed, "I've been an' had a letter off of Jemima Jenkins, an' you better believe you'll never guess what's in it. My! I'm that flustered an' out of breath with the hurry I come over in, it's set my heart to beatin' so I don't know what to do. Mrs. Mills, them palpitations seem to get worse all the time. I was just sayin' to Gorman t'other day, 'Gorman,' I says, 'I guess I'll have to try some different kind of docterin',' I says, 'for I do get such turns.' Now Mrs. Mills this letter give me quite a turn. 'Why,' I says——"

Here Mrs. Mills, who had been sitting all this time, cup in hand, could restrain her impatience no longer. "For the land's sake, Mrs. Gorman," she exclaimed, "whatever is in the letter? Has her uncle went an' left her all his money?"

"Well, Mrs. Mills you'll never guess. Gorman he couldn't, an' he's pretty spry to come at a thing. No, her uncle don't seem to have left her nothing, by what I can make out. Not that I'm sayin' anything against him for that, though it do seem as if he might have left her something, for Jemima's a good critter, if she never did have a chance, poor thing. Well now, Jemima says there is a young lawyer as has been at her uncle's real often, an' he appears to have made up to Jemima pretty smart, for she says it was love at first sight with them both. She says, 'We seem just made for each other, an' he is takin' me to Europe for a

tower,' she says, for she says he is real rich, an' she says, 'when you get this my name will be Jemima Arnold instead of Jemima Jenkins an' we will have set out on our weddin' tower.' An' she says the weddin' is to be real quiet, no one but his folks there, because of her uncle's death, but she'll write to us frequent. Now *did* you ever?"

"No, I *never* did," exclaimed Mrs. Mills. "To think of Jemima Jenkins pickin' up a rich city feller, an' she that homely an' set against men, though I will always hold there was considerable of sour grapes about that. Well, I guess I'll just run over an' let Mrs. Jones know before I red up."

Letters from Jemima, dated from London, Paris and Berlin, served to keep up the excitement, and all breathed forth a spirit of connubial bliss seemingly never equalled before. Never in all its existence had Astley had anything so interesting to talk about. The excitement of the wedding and the wedding trip had hardly died away, when Mrs. Gorman received a letter heavily edged with black. "Land!" she exclaimed, "it's give me such a turn I can hardly bear to open it."

"Dear friend," wrote Jemima, "I had hardly realized that I was no more a made but a happy wife when after 3 short months of blis my Albert was snatched from my side. We was out driving in one of them automobyles, you ain't likely seen them in Astley, but here all the fashionable folks has them, when it run into a ditch and threw out my Albert with grate violence and now I'm a lonely widder. I can right no more.

"Your sorrowing widder friend,
Jemima Arnold.

"P. S. Dear Albert has left me all his money, and I am coming

home soon. Don't never speak of it all to me or my heart will brake. A dew dear friend (excuse my using French, I've got that use to it I jest can't help it), Oh, a dew a dew!"

"My," said Mrs. Mills, "poor Jemima! An' to think we won't never see *him*. I do hope she'll have his pictur."

"That all comes," said Grandma Jones, "of folks flyin' round to see everything they can. I never did hold with it, an' this has set me more agin it than ever. If she had brung him home an' set down quiet an' respectable she might 'a' hed him now."

"Perhaps he wouldn't 'a' come," said her daughter.

"Then," said Grandma Jones severely, "she hed ought to hev made him, or she ain't fit fur to be a wife. Your father always done what I said, an' if it hed pleased the Lord to send me another he'd 'a' done it too. She hed ought to hev made him."

When some six weeks later Mrs. Arnold arrived, clad in irreproachable weeds, all Astley received her with open arms, kissed her with sincere sympathy, fingered her mourning with frank curiosity as to its probable cost, and unanimously agreed that it was the finest ever seen in Astley. In short, Jemima Arnold was a person of much greater consequence than Jemima Jenkins ever had been.

"To think," she mused in the seclusion of her own house, "that a few thousand dollars an' a good yarn done the whole thing. Well, I've had a real fine time, an' I guess I'm the first widder that wasn't bothered with a husband. Land alive! if they only knew," and she laughed with keen enjoyment of her fraud. "Well, I guess I'm smart enough to keep it up." And she was.



THE REDEMPTION OF JIMMIE

BY HELEN ELLSWORTH WRIGHT

Dave Forbes finished checking up his run, mechanically straightened the loose papers on his desk, and sauntered to the window. The Overland Express had already settled herself to a steady, rolling gait for the open country. In the dusk, Forbes could scarcely distinguish the low, brown hills from the dark line of the river. Now and then, a light from some farmhouse window would flash out suddenly and be gone again, or a night bird would laboriously wing himself upward, and be outlined for a moment against the sky.

Gradually it all merged into the darkness, and Forbes turned again to the express car. There was the usual array of parcels, large and small, a kerosene lamp smoked just above the letter rack, and the safe looked non-committal. The messenger pulled out his watch. There was nothing more to be "peddled" till they reached Barlow, at 4:47 a. m. He began to lock up, and unroll his blankets.

At the last stop a coffin cased for shipment had been shoved on board. The rough box stood with its head against the safe, in his own bunk room. Forbes was accustomed to that after his nine years in the service. He had no morbid sentimentality about the quiet passenger whose ticket homeward was a way-bill, but there were other things that troubled him, as he shook up his

mattress and stretched it along the box. Then he lowered the light, and turned in.

Forbes resolutely closed his eyes, but sleep was out of the question. For an hour or so he lay with every muscle tense in the determination to rest. Then he threw off the covers and stood suddenly erect. He took the lamp from its bracket, and turned up the wick. Then he reached for his vest, and drew from its pocket a crumpled, yellow, sheriff's bill. The big black letters stared at him. He knew every one of them by heart.

"Wanted," it ran, "a man 5 ft. 8 inches in height. Smooth face. Dimple in chin. Hair—light, curly. Eyes—gray. Age—about 32. Weight—near 125 lbs. Slight limp in left leg. Crime—forgery! Reward!" Forbes read it through attentively, as if for the first time. "It's Jim Dennison, sure," he muttered. "Poor Ellen!" His face twitched, and the letters on the hand-bill swam before him.

In a moment the years had rolled back. They were all children again, he, and Jimmie, and—Ellen. They were racing, once more, in the big meadow, and she cried because he had won. "It would have been—Jimmie," she sobbed, "if his leg hadn't—wobbled!" It was always Jimmie then; there was always an excuse for his failures, and when the time had come to choose between

the two, again it had been—Jimmie.

Forbes got up, and began pacing the package-flanked aisle to the door. The train was going at high speed, and a sudden lurch sent him reeling against his bunk. The mattress and blankets were dislodged, and slipped behind the rough box to the floor.

As Forbes reached after them, his gaze rested on the address of the shipping tag: "John Laird," he read; "Barlow." Half unconsciously he unfolded the black-bordered death certificate: "Name—Deborah Laird. Color—White. Sex—Female." He skimmed through the familiar form to the physician's signature, then he righted the blankets, and threw himself wearily upon them.

Ten minutes later, he was sitting upright, vigilant. He narrowed his eyes and took a searching glance along the car. That half-suppressed sneeze was unmistakable. It was not the outcome of revolving wheels, neither did it emanate from the piles of assorted freight. There was a heavy shipment of money in the safe. The messenger reached to the desk for his gun, and fingered it thoughtfully.

No sound was audible but his own deep breathing and the rhythmical throbbing of the train. Suddenly he stood up and took the lamp from its bracket again. He shoved off the mattress, bent over the rough box, and looked curiously at the screw heads. Then he held the light across the box and lowered it, stooping to bring his eyes to the same level. He watched its faint glow creep under the crevices beneath the lid. "Um-hump!" he said, "I thought so!"

The messenger began whistling to himself in a soft, tuneless way, as he settled the lamp, and placed his re-

volver within easy reach. The cold-chisel lay by the edge of the safe. He picked it up, and ran his thumb deliberately along its edge. There was an eighth of an inch space between the box and the lid. Forbes inserted the chisel at right angles across one corner of this, and began to pry upwards.

The screws squeaked resistingly in the wood. The board started to give with the pressure. As it did so, there was a sound, something between a curse and a groan from within. A grim smile drew the messenger's mouth as he heard it. He slipped the chisel along the side, and bent his strength upon it. The lid raised slowly. The flickering gleam of a pair of eyes was just visible in the semi-darkness beneath.

Forbes reached for his gun. He pushed its nose into the slit at the head of the box; with a quick wrench of his right arm, he lifted the cover, and the two men looked into each other's eyes.

Forbes was the first to regain himself. "Jimmie—" he faltered. "You!"

The other's eyes were dark with questioning. He turned them wearily away, at last. "It's the old game, Dave," he said. "Isn't it? You always held the trumps."

Forbes got up, and laid his revolver on a packing case at the other end of the car. When he came back, a few minutes later, his face was still a little unsteady. Dennison had made no effort to move. His eyes were closed, and in the flickering light from the burning kerosene, he looked dead.

Forbes put out his hand and shook him. "Come," he said, "tell me about it. You—haven't much time."

"Then you're going to—" Dennison began.



"The two men looked into each other's eyes."

"I don't know what I'm going to do," the other answered.

"Well, if you don't lend a hand it's all up with me!" A whimsical little smile played for a moment over the man's face. "You see, Dave," he began again, "you were always my fortress, in the old days. I took the apples, and you—took the flogging. Afterwards— It was pity, I suppose with both of you—you and—her!"

"Ellen?"

Dennison nodded. "There's no use kicking against the pricks," he went on, "and after all, it doesn't matter now! For myself, I don't care what the outcome is, but for her—for the kid's sake——"

"There's a child?" Forbes questioned.

"Yes," Dennison answered. "A boy—Davie. She wanted it so," he added.

Forbes's face was twitching uncontrollably. He put up his hand between it and the light. "Go on," he said.

Dennison had closed his eyes again, and for a moment there was only the song of the revolving wheels.

The messenger leaned forward. "Go on," he repeated. "It's nearly—three o'clock!"

The man pulled himself together with an effort; he sat half upright in the box. "What's the use?" he cried fiercely. "I was born to be the broken reed! You know it—she knew it. It was failure—failure! Fate played shuttlecock with me always. Then the kid came, and—God, I couldn't see them starve! I would have bartered my soul for money, and—I did." He slipped back into the box again, and turned his face to its rough lining.

A hot drop splashed on his cheek, as he lay there, and Dennison

brushed it slowly away. "Don't, Dave," he said, looking up into his friend's face with a feint at the old boyish smile which Forbes remembered. "Don't! I'm—not worth it!" After a moment he continued. "You see—this was her plan. Laird is her cousin. She thought the certificate and the woman's name would take me through. We didn't figure on your run, or—we'd have known better."

Silence fell between them. The racking motion of the train swayed the bent figure beside the box. Presently Dennison put out his hand and softly touched it. "You always held up clean hands, Dave," he said. "She was proud of that! You mustn't smirch them—for me. They'll be on the lookout—down the road, and——"

Forbes suddenly lifted his head. His face had gone very white, it looked drawn and shrunken. "Good God, Jimmie!" he cried. "Stop! I can't talk. I never could, but——" He impulsively held out both his hands and clasped those of his friend. The two men looked long into each other's eyes.

"You'll see to her till I'm on my feet again?" Dennison whispered.

The messenger bowed his head in answer.

"And the kid?" the other wistfully continued.

"And the kid," Forbes repeated solemnly.

Dennison lay back, and stretched his arms beside him in the box. "Shut me in," he said. "I'm ready."

The messenger lifted the cover and reluctantly placed it in position.

The train was speeding across a corner of the desert. Here and there, clumps of sage brush and cacti broke the stretches of sand, or a yucca palm triumphantly raised its fragrant ensign.

Four figures, for the last mile, had been cautiously making their way up over the tender to the engine cab, but the man, with his hand on the throttle and his eyes narrowed to the shining rails ahead, did not see them.

Forbes heard the sudden hiss as the air was turned on; the emergency brakes were set, and the engine came to a standstill. He was on the alert in an instant. He sprang to his feet—opened the door—thrust out his head.

Three men were clambering from the cab. One was the fireman, the other — The light glanced on a pair of steel-rimmed mouths "A holdup!" Forbes muttered. He felt his car being cut off. The locomotive bounded forward with the mail and the express cars.

The messenger made ready. He had forgotten Dennison and the unfastened cover of the rough box. He put up the extra barricade—extinguished the light. By the door he waited.

The engine ran two miles down the track. It seemed interminable. They stopped at last. The fireman, forced at the point of a gun, ordered



"‘A hold up,’ Forbes muttered."

him to open up. A bullet was his answer. Instantly the air was full of snapping, snarling harbingers of death. The shattered glass from the window fell in a clinking shower. Four to one were heavy odds against him, but if—

There was a sound at the other door. Forbes turned. As he did so, he was conscious of something—it might have been but a sudden draught of night wind that drew it—

self above his collar line. He staggered; the rush of the train was in his ears. An arm was slipped about him. He was sinking back—and back—and back.

Outside, the firing went on. There was no retaliation, and all at once a great stillness pervaded. Then, there were voices again. Some one was climbing up the outside of the car to the little window over the door.

Forbes did not hear them, but over by the safe, the rough box stood unlidded, empty. Dennison, with his friend's still-smoking revolver in his hand, crouched half hidden in the freight.

A shaggy face was silhouetted above the window ledge. The man peered in, cautiously, at first, then, emboldened by the silence, he threw a lighted match. The limp figure on the floor was convincing. He thrust in his head—protruded his arms—swung them back against the walls of the car, and shoved himself forward till he lay across the sill, wriggling upon his stomach.

Dennison took deliberate aim. The little double-action weapon spit a volley of bullets straight ahead. The man loosed his hold. His throat gurgled; the body slipped back, and fell heavily to the ground.

Dennison, following up his advantage, could scarcely see in the darkness of the young day. A sudden belch of flame from a revolver showed him the location of the enemy, and he peppered them.

The shots from without grew fewer—they had almost ceased, but Dennison held to his post. Then there came a stinging in his breast. Something hot oozed out. It trickled sluggishly. It was hard to breathe. After that he fired at random. He was giddy, but the safe was all right. He had—saved it. And

that check—would she know—the wrong—had been—canceled?

When Forbes came to, it was yet dark. He lay still trying to gather his benumbed senses, but his thoughts came to him with an effort. He realized that the train was running light. They were reversing, rapidly. All at once a flood of consciousness overwhelmed him. He tried to rise. A weight was stretched across his legs. He bent over it, and struck a match.

Dennison was still clutching the revolver. His face was upturned—the eyes part open. His lower jaw sagged.

The light flickered, and went out. Forbes gripped the body before him.

"Jimmie!" he called, then louder, "Jimmie!" He grasped the man's shirt—tore it open and thrust his hand in against the breast. It was damp and still. He felt for the shoulders and shook him vigorously. "Jimmie—Jimmie!" he cried again, then drew away in sudden revulsion. The darkness seemed teeming with faces—faces of the child, Ellen—faces of the woman, Ellen—and faces—of Jimmie.

He shoved the form off his legs, and staggered to his feet. He groped his way to the desk, and fumbled above the letter-rack for the lamp. His weakness and the swaying of the car made his movements slow, uncertain.

The engine slackened. There was a concussion, and the jar of recoupling. Voices came from the outside—anxious, frightened voices—shrill, querulous voices. The passengers from the Pullman and the tourist sleeper were aroused.

Forbes heard them but faintly. With his fast ebbing strength he riveted his thoughts upon one idea.



"Dennison held to his post."

Jimmie must be protected, for his own sake—for Ellen's—for the kid's.

Some one was pounding on the car door. "Say, there!" shouted the fireman. "All right, are you, Dave?"

"Aye," Forbes answered with an effort. "All right."

The other continued. "We're going to run ahead of time, and

make Barlow in an hour," he said.

The voices again grew indistinct. There was a lurch forward. The engine started, wheezed, then slowly trailed the long train up the track.

When they were under headway again, Forbes relighted the lamp. He turned to the body. It lay less than four feet from the box, but to the wounded man, it seemed a day's

journey, and—there would be but an hour! The increasing speed of the train forced him to his knees, and he crawled, a little way at a time, on his mission.

The clock on the desk measured five minutes—ten—fifteen. Dennison was still limp, when the messenger reached him. Forbes bent over, and stroked the damp hair back from the forehead. He smoothed the lids over the eyes, and tenderly raised the jaw into position, binding it with his own handkerchief. Tears spattered the upturned face, and Forbes made no effort to check them. "She'll be proud of you, Jimmie," he whispered.

The clock had counted another ten minutes. A piercing shriek from the whistle of the engine rent the morning air. Forbes started. "We must hurry, Jimmie!" he said. He grasped the body by the shoulders, and tugged at it helplessly. It did not move. He slipped his hands under the arm pits—threw his own bulk backwards, and dragged the form half way up against him. In his weakness, sweat started from every pore, and he lay panting, exhausted.

How loudly the clock ticked! He could hear it above the roar of the train. The first grayness of coming dawn crept in at the windows, and he gathered his strength for renewed effort. Half the distance was covered. The light had reached the face. It looked twisted, distorted. Forbes sat up. With infinite pains he readjusted the binding handkerchief, and smoothed down the eyelids again.

The clock had meted another

quarter of an hour, but Forbes lay spent against the box with his burden in his arms. Suddenly he aroused himself and looked excitedly about the car. "We'll make it, Jimmie," he said. "You needn't be afraid! There's time—there's plenty of time!" He raised himself and tugged feverishly at the corpse. "There!" he went on. "Why, boy, you aren't heavy to pack!" He steadied the body for a moment against his own. It swayed, lunged heavily forward, and half fell into the box. Forbes straightened out the arms and the legs. "There's blood on the floor, Jimmie," he whispered, "but nobody'll know. They'll think—it was me." He adjusted the cover, and groped blindly for the cold chisel and the screws.

The morning light was dimming the burning kerosene, but the messenger did not see it. "They'll both—be proud of you—" he repeated, "Ellen—and the kid!"

When Forbes regained consciousness, the doctor from Barlow, and the train crew, were gathered around him. He sat upright, and looked wildly about in search of something. "Jimmie!" he cried, and then—he remembered.

The freight and the station agents were just shoving the coffin box onto the hand truck.

"Dave," said the fireman, bending over him, "you've made a record for yourself." But the messenger shook his head.

The engineer pulled off his cap. "You've got what I call pluck!" he said.

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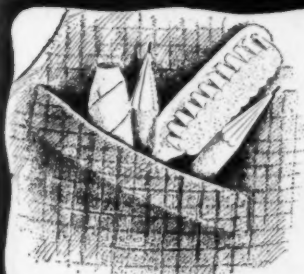
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Very sincerely,

MRS. M. RYERSON."

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ALL TRAINS VIA WASHINGTON

The illustration shows a Pullman Vestibule with passengers. A man in a suit and hat is standing near a sign that reads "TEN DAY STOPOVER ALLOWED AT WASHINGTON BALTIMORE AND PHILADELPHIA". Another sign reads "DEPOSIT TICKETS IMMEDIATELY ON ARRIVAL AT EITHER CITY." A woman in a long dress and hat is standing in the vestibule, and a child is sitting on a bench in the background.

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Dining Car Service.

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"As I have suffered no relapse since, and as I took no other medicine, I am sure that your Compound restored my health and I believe saved my life."—MRS. D. ARNOLD.

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The Oatine Girl's Beauty Hints No. 1

Soap and water will not cleanse your skin—they simply remove the surface dirt. Prove this for yourself by carefully washing your face and then drying it. Now rub a little OATINE into the skin and wipe off immediately. **The towel is black**, proving that washing will not remove the dirt accumulations in the pores—the direct cause of poor complexions so prevalent. If your dealer hasn't OATINE send us 50 cents for 4 oz. jar prepaid.

Oatine is unsurpassed for keeping the skin clean, soft, clear and beautiful.

For sale by John Wanamaker, New York and Philadelphia; Pantan & White, Duluth; D. Crawford & Company, St. Louis; Chas. A. Stevens & Bros., Chicago; Wm. Donaldson & Company, Minneapolis and all leaders.

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Dept. U, 1030 Tribune Bldg., Chicago.

Agents Earn Liberal Commissions

selling OATINE and our other preparations, such as Talcum Powder, Face Powder, Bust Developer and others.

VALUABLE PREMIUMS GIVEN **FREE**

In addition for successful effort—such as beautiful gold watches, genuine diamond ring, sewing machine, Apollo Piano Player, tailor-made suit, cloak, skirt and 150 other desirable articles.

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This Victor Talking Machine is one of our premiums. All others same high standard.

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Electric Lighted Trains

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MINNEAPOLIS, DES
MOINES and KANSAS
CITY. ♡ ♡ ♡ ♡

"Great Western Limited"

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Remember the rates
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Whiskey and Beer Habit

Permanently Cured by

"ORRINE."

Physicians pronounce drunkenness a disease of the nervous system, creating a morbid craving for a stimulant. Continued indulgence in whiskey, beer or wine eats away the stomach lining and stupifies the digestive organs, thus destroying the digestion and ruining the health.

"**ORRINE**" permanently removes the craving for liquor by acting directly on the affected nerves, restoring the stomach and digestive organs to normal conditions, improving the appetite and restoring the health. No sanitarium treatment necessary—simple, inexpensive, harmless and sure. Can be given secretly if desired. We will refund the money if it fails.

Mr. R. T. Sims, Brooklyn, N. Y., writes: "Use my name as a twenty-year drunkard restored to manhood and health by four boxes of '**ORRINE**.' It is a wonderful and marvelous cure for the drink habit."

Mrs. E. Wycliff, New York City, writes: "'**ORRINE**' cured my husband, who was a steady drunkard for many years. He now has no desire for stimulants, his health is good and he is fully restored to manhood. He used only five boxes of '**ORRINE**.'"

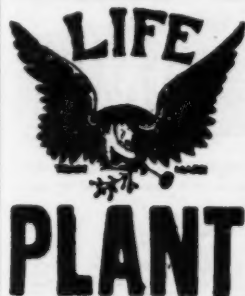
Mrs. W. L. D., Helena, Mont., writes: "I have waited one year before writing you of the permanent cure of my son. He took sanitarium treatment, as well as other advertised cures, but they all failed until we gave him '**ORRINE**.' He is now fully restored to health and has no desire for strong drink."

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Price \$1 per box, 6 boxes for \$5. Mailed in plain, sealed wrapper by Orrine Company, 818 14th street, Washington, D. C. Interesting booklet (sealed) free on request. Sold and recommended by the Public Drug Co., 150 State-st., Chicago.



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Life Plant
THE GREAT
BLOOD REMEDY

fails to cure any case of RHEUMATISM, CATARRH, ECZEMA or any disease caused by impure blood. Now is the time to take it. Should Life Plant fail to cure, your druggist will refund your money. What more assurance could you ask? We take all the risk—you take none.

RHEUMATISM.

Mrs. Mary J. Suitt, of Cambridge, Ohio, says:

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LIFE PLANT COMPANY,
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The NEW WAY TO



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STRENGTH

Everyman and woman
may find it in the
great nerve tonic and
blood cleanser.

NERVAN TABLETS

They tone up the nerves—purify the blood—bring to the skin the bloom of health—to the form plumpness and vigor of strong manhood and womanhood.

NERVAN TABLETS

positively cure Kidney and Bladder troubles and Rheumatism and Nervous Dyspepsia. They create an appetite and aid digestion. They regulate the secretions and purify the system and clear the complexion. Unlike the many harmful liquid kidney and rheumatic mixtures containing alcohol, Nervan Tablets do not inflame the weak and diseased organs. They cleanse, heal and strengthen.

We guarantee Nervan Tablets to do all we claim or return the money. Take a few Nervan Tablets and note the wonderful effect.

FREE A liberal size trial package by mail to any address on receipt of ten cents to cover cost of mailing.

Sent by mail on receipt of \$1.

NERVAN TABLET CO., Chicago, Ill.

New Line  **Fine Service**

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Through from Chicago via Dubuque, Waterloo and Albert Lea. Fast Vestibule Night train with through Stateroom and Open-section Sleeping Car, Buffet-Library Car and Free Reclining Chair Car. Dining Car Service en route. Tickets of agents of I. C. R. R. and connecting lines.

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IS WORTH \$40,000

We sell cultivated seed and plants. Send 4c in stamps for 55-page Book on enormous, easily-earned profit in Ginseng, and current issue of magazine, "The Ginseng Garden."

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ADVICE TO MOTHERS. MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP

should always be used for children teething. It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays all pain, cures wind colic, and is the best remedy for diarrhoea.

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GUARANTEED

**THE WILSON HAY
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placed in the nasal
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Absolute Protection against dust and
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Patented 1901.

are adjustable to any nose, invisible and perfectly comfortable. After wearing them a few minutes, the hay fever is no longer annoyed by dust. Nasal discharges cease; breathing through the nose is normal, eyes become clear; complete relief is experienced, identical with the sensation felt on an ocean voyage or in an "exempt" region. Wearing disks only when exposed to large quantities of dust positively prevents recurrence of attacks.

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Natural
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Pompadour, \$3

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Fadeless switches, \$1.00 and
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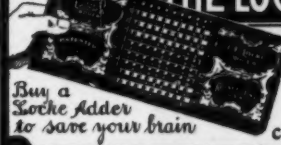
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A Trial Package Mailed FREE
which will give any lady a beautiful
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A paper for the **FARMER WHO THINKS**.
It deals with the larger questions which interest
the intelligent tiller of the soil. Send 25 cents
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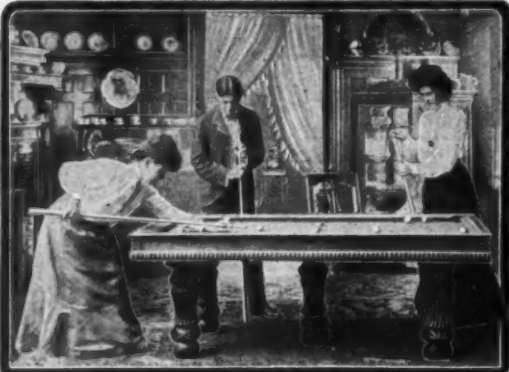
THE FARMERS VOICE CO.,

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The equal of high priced standard tables differing therefrom only in design, which is adapted to the home, and not at all in equipment. Nine styles, ranging in price from \$30.00 to \$150.00. Sold on easy payments. Write for new catalogue and further particulars.

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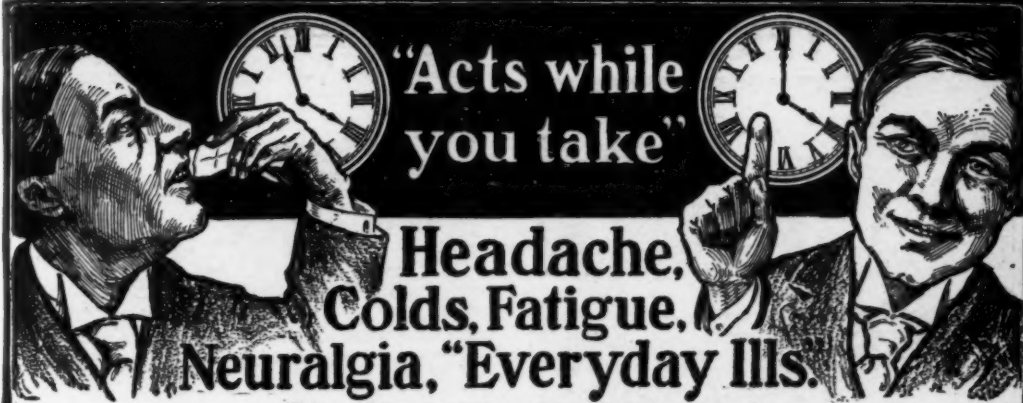
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We don't tell fortunes, but give honest scientific facts; **ASTROLOGY.** We point the way to health, happiness and success. Send six 2 cent stamps and birth data for life sketch. Circular **Free.** Write.

CHICAGO ASTROLOGICAL ASSN., 47 E. Van Buren St.

The Life of President Roosevelt

You ought to have it. See page 611 of this number.



"Acts while
you take"

Headache,
Colds, Fatigue,
Neuralgia, "Everyday Ills."

The Great Human Missions of

ORANGEINE

POWDERS

Prevention

Its accurate corrective power promptly reaches cause of incipient ailment and prevents little ills from becoming serious. Offsets chill, exposure, fatigue, excess. In big establishments it saves hours of time and suffering for employer and employee.

Relief

It almost instantly reaches the cause of pain, all kinds of Headache, Neuralgia, and the pain ceases. Under systematic use it dispels even chronic cases of Headache and Periodic Pain.

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Advanced Colds, Grip, Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Nervousness and General Debility quickly disappear under the systematic use of Orangeine, which corrects functional action, increases assimilation of nourishment. Builds Tissue.

Trial Package Free Orangeine is sold by druggists everywhere in 25c, 50c and \$1.00 packages. On receipt of request we will mail 10c trial package FREE with full directions, composition and description of its wide human influences. Address "ORANGEINE," Chicago, Ill.

AND BE HAPPY

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Face Cream

"The Most Perfect Complexion
Improver of the Century."

A skin food, purely vegetable, which takes the place of a powder, softens and whitens the skin, removes Blackheads, Moth Patches and Pimples, and clears the pores.

Price 50c per jar.

Vegetable Cream Soap

The only Soap that is perfectly adapted to the complexion.

Price, 25c per bar.

A sample of soap mailed FREE to any one upon request if this paper is mentioned.

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For sale by all druggists and department stores, or mailed upon receipt of price.



If the Baby is Cutting Teeth

Be sure and use that old and well-tried remedy,

MRS. WINSLOW'S

SOOTHING SYRUP

FOR CHILDREN TEETHING

It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays all pain, cures wind colic, and is the best remedy for diarrhoea.

Twenty-five Cents a Bottle.

BLIND 23 YEARS SIGHT RESTORED



MR. PAUL LEONI, Pres. Quick Service Laundry, 232 So. Paulina St., Chicago, after being blind for twenty-three years, has his sight restored by Dr. Madison, and now reads finest print.

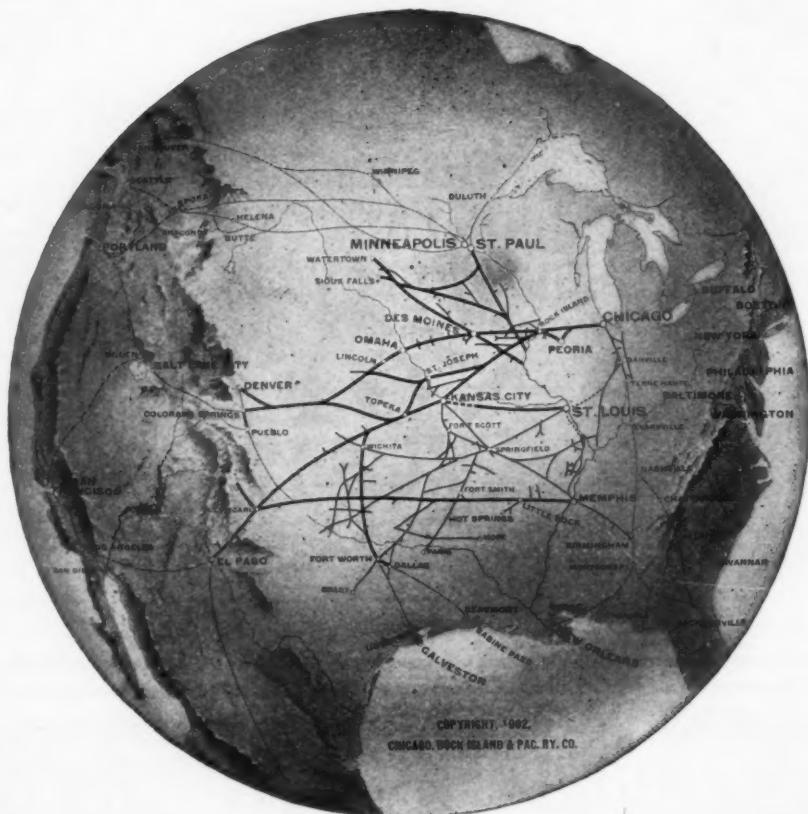
The Madison Absorption Method cures Cataracts, Spots, Scums, Granular Lids, Optic Nerve Diseases, and all causes of blindness.

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I want to hear from those disappointed by failures of other methods. I straighten Cross Eyes by a bloodless method always successful. No knife, pain or risk. M. J. Bryan, Gen. Agt. Wise, Cent. Ry., Duluth, Minn., cured. Latest book in colors with testimonials and my advice sent FREE. No medicines sent until ordered.

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Not States, But—

Oklahoma is not a State. Neither is Indian Territory. And yet, at the last census, their population was almost as great as the combined population of Arizona, Delaware, Idaho, Montana, Nevada and Wyoming. *To-day it is greater.*

Their area is equal to the combined area of all the New England States, with Delaware thrown in for good measure.

The largest city in the Twin Territories is only fifteen years old, but it has a population of nearly 35,000. There are eight other towns with a population of 5,000 or more, besides innumerable smaller places of from 100 to 3,000.

No section of the United States is growing more rapidly or building on a firmer foundation. No section offers greater opportunities to the man who is looking for a new location. This is as true of the professional man as it is of the farmer and merchant.

Oklahoma and Indian Territories are gridironed by the lines of the Rock Island and its sister system, the Frisco. Every town of importance is on one or the other of these railroads.



We have issued and will gladly mail to anyone who will ask for them, two little books descriptive of the Southwest. One book is called "Men Wanted." It contains a list of the business openings along the lines of the Rock Island System. The other is entitled "Rock Island States Southwest." It describes at considerable length those portions of the Southwest which have been thrown open for settlement by recent extensions of Rock Island lines.

JOHN SEBASTIAN, Passenger Traffic Manager,
Rock Island System, Chicago, Ill.

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Our active advertising campaign will be continued, but we have decided to give to the consumers of our FERNDOLL brand a part of our advertising appropriation, realizing that they have contributed largely to the increase in our business by their many endorsements and recommendations of

Ferndell

PURE FOOD GOODS

To fully accomplish this we have selected from leading designers and artists of Germany and France a number of Pictures, Art Studies and Pillow Tops. The high standard of our FERNDOLL PURE FOOD GOODS is carried out in the artistic merit of our souvenirs.

F R E E

Send in your name and address, also that of your grocer, and we will send you, prepaid, this beautiful STUDY IN CHILD LIFE, in dainty pastel colors, size $9\frac{3}{4}$ x $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches; also our interesting Souvenir Book.



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White Rose Soap

No. 4711

One feels at a glance
One knows by a touch
and by the exquisite
aroma that **WHITE
ROSE SOAP** is the
acme of skilled perfection.

The best Glycerine Soap, "No. 4711."
Its purity is absolute; its perfume unequalled. Used for years in the Court of H. I. M., the Emperor of Russia. Can be applied to the most tender and delicate skin.

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Send 15 cents for full size sample cake.



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You will readily recognize the advantage of having your business handled by a firm that is housed in a fire-proof building, as the possibility of loss of materials or being seriously delayed by fire is eliminated.

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Why is this Cook so angry ?

She has been given notice to leave.

Is she not a competent Cook ?

She is Experienced and Capable, but she is an old Foggy and will not use Cottolene for Shortening.

Oh, how foolish!

She has made all the Family Ill with her Greasy Griddle Cakes, her Soggy Biscuit, her Lard-Soaked Doughnuts, and her Tough Pastry, and now they say she has Got to Go.

Why will she not use Good, Pure, Nutritious Cottolene ?

Because "The Way of the Transgressor is Lard."

Cottolene will be found at good grocers. Sold only in sealed pails. 20-page Cottolene Primer, illustrated in colors, from which above is reproduced, sent upon receipt of 2c stamp

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Merits its international popularity because it is the recognized cure for all Scalp and Hair ailments. GROWS HAIR—STOPS FALLING OUT—CURES SCALP ECZEMA—STOPS SCALP IRRITATION. Makes the hair "Do Up" just right.

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We beg to announce to the public that one of the best known and well established manufacturing concerns in the country, with whom we have had extensive business dealings, and who are well rated and doing a prosperous business, have placed in our hands for sale a limited amount of their 7% guaranteed preferred stock, dividends payable semi-annually.

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D. L. TAYLOR, Mgr. Agricultural Dept.

NOTE.—I will see personally people interested in this investment Mondays of each week; otherwise, information furnished by correspondence. D. L. TAYLOR.

French Lick

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THE waters of these springs afford a constitutional cleansing and healing, improving the complexion, restoring appetite, assisting assimilation, aiding liver, kidneys and bowels to perform their normal functions with regularity and in a natural manner. To the nervous, overworked man or woman a brief period of rest and quiet and the taking of the wonderful waters at these spas that physicians so heartily prescribe are beyond financial estimate in their benefits.

Excursion Rates and Excellent Train Service from all Parts of the Country.

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Hotel Rates range from \$8.00 up to \$35.00 per week including free use of waters. Accommodations from the plain boarding house up to the finest apartments and service to be obtained in the best metropolitan hotels.

Book'ets telling all about the waters and giving list of the hotels and boarding houses with their rates sent free.

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Frost King and Frost Queen Chamois Vests

are worn by men and women who appreciate cold-weather comfort—who want protection against cold—damp winds and sudden changes; people who go out of doors on the coldest days—those who make it their duty to reduce the dangers of pneumonia and all chest and lung troubles to a minimum.

These garments are made of specially-tanned chamois skin; they cannot be made warmer—or better. Perfect fitting—light and comfortable. Price, \$3.00 each.

Ask your druggist to show you a Frost King or Frost Queen Chamois Vest. Look for the label—you'll find satisfaction. "Health and Comfort"—An interesting and descriptive booklet sent free upon request.

Please mention your dealer's name.

Bauer & Black 314 25th St Chicago U S A

A. W. B. Boulevard Fast Black Velvet.
Guaranteed Not to Rub.
Lustrous in Color.

A. W. B.
Boulevard Velvet
Wear Guaranteed

Salvage of each yard stamped:
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For Sale by Leading Dry Goods Stores.

If your dealer cannot supply you write to

A. W. B. Boulevard Velvet,
131, 133, 135, 137 Spring Street, New York,
and we will send you name of dealer who can supply you.

YES

There are other railroads between the east and the west.

BUT

it is always well to secure the best you can for the money.

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You should bear in mind this remark of an experienced traveler:

"For the excellence of its tracks, the speed of its trains, the safety and comfort of its patrons, the loveliness and variety of its scenery, the number and importance of its cities, and the uniformly correct character of its service, the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad is not surpassed by any similar institution on either side of the Atlantic."

Send to George H. Daniels, General Passenger Agent, Grand Central Station, New York, a 2-cent stamp for a copy of "America's Summer Resorts."



Soap-Making A can of *Banner Lye* and your kitchen grease (if you will stop pouring it into your sink) will make ten pounds of pure hard soap or twenty gallons of best soft soap, without boiling and without large kettles. Takes only ten minutes.

Write for booklet "*Uses of Banner Lye*" and give us your grocer's or druggist's name, should he not have it.

The Penn Chemical Works, Philadelphia, U. S. A.

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Don't be satisfied with merely getting rid of the dirt you can see. The dirt that you can't see is far more dangerous—the dirt in

<i>Cuspidors</i>	<i>Sinks</i>
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is full of germs which bring all sorts of disease.

Banner Lye

(a few cents' worth a month) will clean out these dangerous and neglected spots, and give disease little chance to live in your house. It is odorless and colorless, cheap, powerful and quick.

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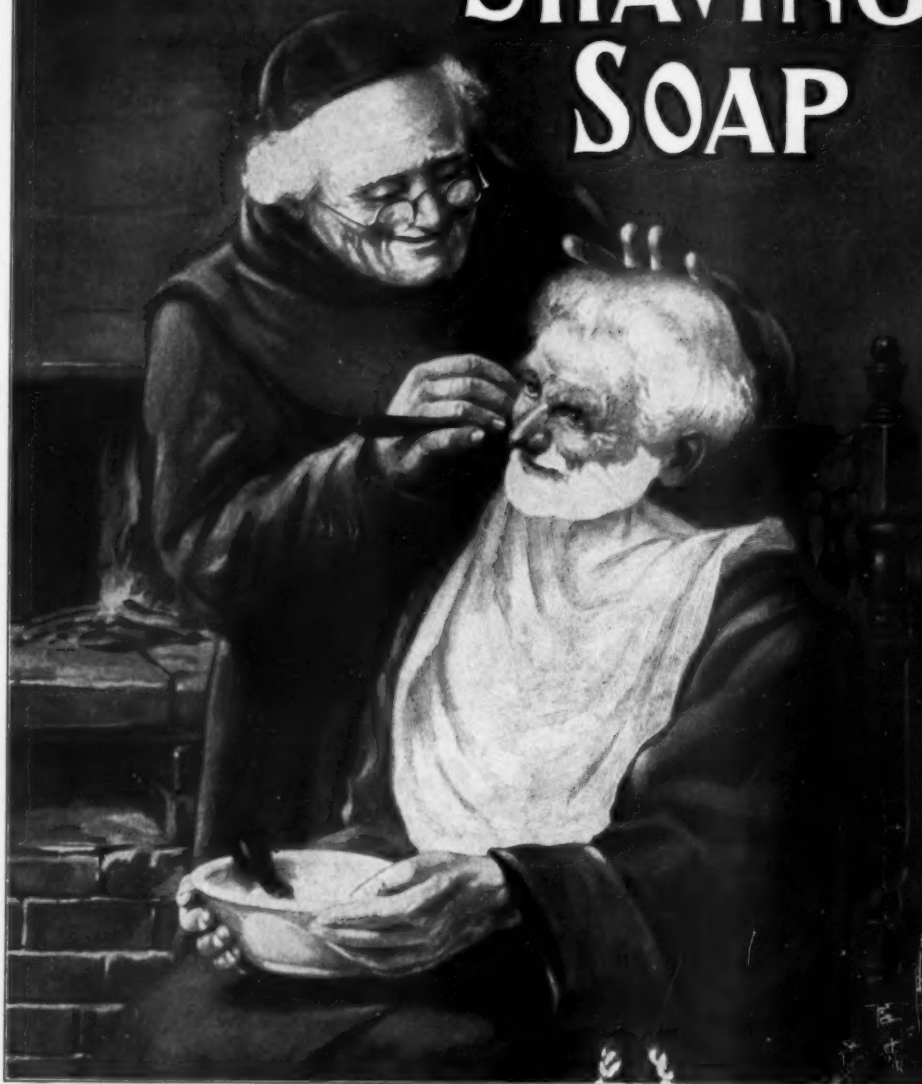
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